TEACHERS ASSESS AND REIMAGINE JAMAICA'S EDUCATION SYSTEM

National Consultation Report in Support of the Development of Jamaica's Commitment Statement to the Global Transforming Education Summit

We have a love for teaching | We have a love for children | We have a love for education

TEACHERS' VOICES MATTER

AUGUST 2022

"Our Voices Matter"
"We have a love for teaching"
"We have a love for children"
"We have a love for education"

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List of Acronyms

COVID-19   Coronavirus Disease 2019
ECE   Early Childhood Education
ICT   Information and Communication Technology
SDG   Sustainable Development Goal
TES   Transforming Education Summit
UN   United Nations

About this Report

In September 2022, Jamaica will participate in the Global Transforming Education Summit (TES) which is being convened under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary-General during the 77th UN General Assembly. As part of its preparations, the Government of Jamaica has prepared its commitment statement to the Summit. This 2-page document captures the shared vision, voices and thoughts on the strategic direction of the Education Sector including approaches and strategies that are key to transforming the sector and achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 – Quality Education.

This Report, Teachers Assess and Reimagine Jamaica's Education System: Teachers Voices Matter, is aligned to the TES Commitment statement and presents the information captured in six online consultations (See Appendix 1 for the dates of the consultations) held with over 900 teachers from early childhood, primary and secondary schools as well as schools focused on children with disabilities in urban and rural areas and other towns/other urban centres, to support Jamaica's preparations to the TES. These consultations strategically engaged teachers drawing on their in-depth knowledge of the education sector, their experiences, and perspectives. This report therefore captures the outcomes of these consultations which were staged virtually due primarily to the still existing threat of COVID-19 as well as for flexibility to capture the voices of as many teachers as possible.

In addition, Jamaica's submissions to the TES reflect deep consideration of information contained in several recently completed national assessments on the education sector undertaken by the Government of Jamaica in collaboration with development partners within the last two years. Chief among these assessments are the Jamaica Education Transformation Commission Report 2021, Students Reimagine the Jamaican Education System Report 2021, The Public Expenditure Review on Education 2021, the Medium-Term Socio-Economic Policy Framework 2021 – 2024 under Vision 2030 Jamaica, and the Voluntary National Review of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2022, among others. These assessments were underpinned by extensive stakeholder consultations that included education technocrats and administrators from the Ministry, other government stakeholders, the private sector, academia, students and youth, other related stakeholders and, to a lesser extent, teachers which is why the 2022 TES consultation series specifically targeted the voices of teachers sector wide.

In summary, the preparatory work for the TES therefore provided an excellent opportunity for a coordinated engagement of Jamaican teachers, to allow them to share their vision, perspectives and strategic direction on the new education landscape and way forward for education in Jamaica to 2030 and beyond.

Executive Summary

Main Findings of the Consultations

This Report, Teachers Assess and Reimagine Jamaica's Education System: Teachers Voices Matter, presents the information captured in six online consultations that supported inclusive dialogue and meaningful engagement with over 900 teachers from urban and rural schools across the early childhood, primary and secondary levels. The main objectives of the consultations were to allow teachers to share their visions, thoughts on the strategic direction tied to, and perspectives on, reimagining education in Jamaica between now and 2030 as Jamaica seeks to transform its education sector as part of overall activities to advance its sustainable development agenda. The consultations incorporated three main approaches or methodologies:

1. **An Online quantitative survey** which included 35 questions, designed to capture teachers' views on teaching, the teaching profession, their job satisfaction, their role in the classroom, and various aspects of their school, and their future in education, the future of education and the impact of COVID-19.

2. **A Situational Analysis of the Education Sector** that began in the **first session** with the use of the interactive tool Mentimeter. Using this tool, teachers considered the following seven topics:

   - Topic #1: General State of Jamaica's Education Sector
   - Topic #2: The School Environment
   - Topic #3: Inclusiveness and Equity
   - Topic #4: The Role and Importance of Teachers/Issues and Challenges
   - Topic #5: The Profile of Jamaica's Teachers
   - Topic #6: ICT and Digital Transformation
   - Topic #7: COVID-19

   This led to the development of recommendations for the transformation of the education system in Jamaica.

3. **Consideration of the five thematic action tracks of the Transforming Education Summit (TES) - a second interactive session** followed that focused on capturing the perspectives of teachers as it relates to these proposed strategies and transformative initiatives.

Of note, participating teachers also engaged in general discussions that provided additional information, context and examples related to the results of the interactive sessions as well as recommendations on the way forward for education in Jamaica. The use of Zoom also allowed participants to place comments and share feedback using the chat function. All comments and feedback were incorporated accordingly.

Some Key Findings of the Online Survey

The online survey was undertaken by 349 teachers and revealed the following:

- Teachers care about their students.
- Schools are supportive of their students.
- Schools strongly discourage acts of bullying of any kind.
- Teachers feel that their students' socioemotional development is as important as their academic development.
- Teachers are hopeful about their future in education.

There are several areas in the education system in Jamaica that teachers identified as in need of improvement. Some of these are:

- Teachers want more professional development opportunities.
- Teachers want higher levels of job satisfaction and want to feel better supported in the classroom.
- There is need for greater levels of incorporation of teacher-student collaboration to foster better learning experiences.
- Teachers need to use a wider range of teaching and assessment methods.
- Teachers want to enhance their digital capabilities and skills.
- There is need for schools to promote greater awareness and understanding of the causes of gender-based violence.
- There is need for schools to place greater value on critical and creative thinking.
- Resources need to be more fairly distributed within schools.
- Schools need to engage in additional activities to promote greater awareness of climate change and environmental issues.
- There is a need for schools to scale up the promotion of wellness – mental, physical and spiritual.

Other survey findings include:

- 87.1% of teachers either strongly agreed or agreed that despite the issues confronting education and the socioeconomic issues and challenges facing Jamaica which impact the education system, they are still passionate about teaching.
- 67.4% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they felt supported at their school.
- 75.6% of teachers either strongly agreed or agreed that they were satisfied with the professional development opportunities that they are provided with.
- 73.1% of respondents indicated they strongly agree or agree that they are hopeful of their future in teaching, with 79% of respondents in early childhood education strongly agreeing or agreeing with this statement as well as 66% of respondents at the primary and secondary level.
- 82% of teachers strongly agreed or agreed that they incorporate teacher-student collaboration for better learning experiences.

- 85% of teachers strongly agreed or agreed that they were comfortable teaching in a blended learning environment.
- 79% of teachers in early childhood education strongly agreed or agreed that they needed to enhance their digital capability and skills while 90% of teachers at the primary and secondary level strongly agreed or agreed that they need to enhance their digital capability and skills.
- 42% of respondents strongly agreed that their school is child rights based and child friendly, with another 41% of respondents agreeing with this statement. That indicates that some 60% believe schools could be safer more child-centred spaces.
- 75.6% of respondents strongly agreed that their school strongly discourages acts of bullying of any kind.
- While 52.4% of respondents strongly agreed that their school does not support gender-based violence in any form, only 21.8% of respondents strongly agreed that their school promotes awareness and understanding of the causes of gender-based violence.
- 31.5% of respondents strongly agreed that resources are fairly-evenly distributed in their schools.
- Close to 79% of respondents indicated that the impact of COVID-19 on the educational outcomes of their schools was significant; 15.5% of respondents remained neutral on this topic and 4.6% of respondents strongly disagreed

Teacher Reimagine Education – Recommendations for Defining a New Education Landscape for Jamaica

Teachers stressed the need for:
- Addressing the issues at the lower levels of education so that students are better able to transition from early childhood to primary school and to high school.
- Better understanding of student goals and their differing abilities and needs.
- Revamping of the curriculum and exam structures to cater to students of varying abilities.
- Increasing resources in schools especially in rural and farming communities.
- Fully removing corporal punishment in schools to improve the mental health and safety of schools.
- Urgently addressing the social ills such as crime and violence that are permeating the society as this is contributing to children's poor emotional states resulting in increasing incidences of aggression and violence in schools.
- A campaign on education so that society can better understand the importance of education.
- Free education for all[1].

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[1] The Government of Jamaica covers basic school fees in public institutions for students age 6 through secondary and subsidizes the ECD sector through teacher stipends but there are other significant costs – transport, food, costs of additional books, uniforms, etc

- Fully equipped, accessible and adequately resourced schools to help students with various disabilities or different abilities.
- More resources to address children with special needs - there is need for early assessments and special needs assessment centres across the island so that issues that emerge can be addressed quickly[2].
- Ensuring that all teachers are well trained and certified. Currently sixty-five per cent of teachers hold a university degree as well as teacher certification,
- Improving the safety of schools and the school environment - while schools are generally safe from persons/criminal elements coming onto the school compound and causing harm, some students may contribute to the school not being safe through the use of violence at school especially fighting.
- Equitable access to human, learning, teaching, and information technology resources in urban and rural schools.
- Emphasis on children that are gifted and the creation of accelerated learning programmes.
- A values and attitudes programme to be introduced across the country to remove some of the new norms and bad behaviours permeating society and provide students and young persons with good principles and practices that they can emulate[3].
- Better and fairer treatment for teachers and the teaching profession.
- More resources that would enable teachers to better perform their jobs.
- Ensuring regular participation in the decision-making processes especially those involving education assessments and policies at the national level.
- Building the capacity of parents and sensitizing them to their role in their children's education so as to ensure increased parental involvement in education with parents at home playing their part in helping with their children's education.
- More training opportunities to be able to improve and increase the use of ICTs in teaching and learning and capitalize on its full potential.
- Greater and more equitable access to WIFI and the internet in communities across Jamaica.
- Upskilling and retooling of teachers to meet the demands of the 21st century classrooms including socio-emotional learning, critical and creative thinking skills and hybrid instruction and assessment.

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[2] The early screening identification and referral pathway initiative which has begun will respond to these needs.
[3] The civics and character education that has been introduced will help to significantly address this.

Section 1:
Background and Introduction
Transforming Education Summit (TES)

> *"Education is a fundamental human right, central to the dignity and empowerment of individuals, to driving sustainable development, and to building peace. Any solution to the world's problems starts with education, the greatest tool we have to fulfil and grow human potential. The Transforming Education Summit will seek to renew our collective commitment to education and lifelong learning as a pre-eminent public good."*
>
> (UN Secretary General, António Guterres)

The objective of the Transforming Education Summit (TES) is to mobilize political ambition, action, solutions, and solidarity to transform education: to take stock of efforts to recover pandemic-related learning losses; to reimagine education systems for the world of today and tomorrow; and to revitalize national and global efforts to achieve SDG 4 Quality Education *(Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all).* Specifically, the TES is being held to:

- Ensure quality education and lifelong learning for all
- Renew a global commitment to education to deliver on existing commitments, and to help with learning recovery due to losses endured the COVID-19 pandemic
- Revitalize efforts to achieve SDG 4 (Quality Education) between now and 2030 - SDG #4 provides an overarching guide to ensure that all girls and boys complete free primary and secondary schooling. Pursuing SDG 4 also requires countries to aim to provide equal access to affordable vocational training, to eliminate gender and wealth disparities, and achieve universal access to quality higher education. It is underpinned by 10 targets to guide countries in their pursuit to ensure "inclusive and equitable education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all".

The United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office in Jamaica as well as UNICEF Jamaica and UNESCO supported the Government of Jamaica in its preparatory work for its participation in the TES. National preparations for the TES employed three primary intersecting and reinforcing workstreams as recommended by the TES Secretariat. These are presented in Figure 2 below:

Figure 2: Primary Intersecting and Reinforcing Workstreams for the Preparation of Country Commitment Statements to the Summit
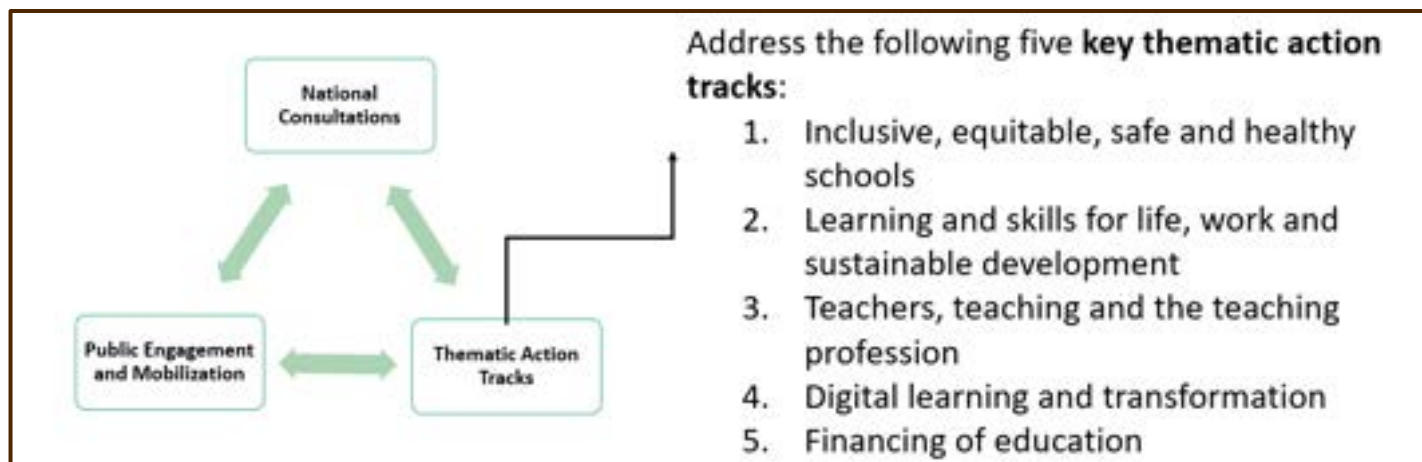
Jamaica's Commitment Statement to the TES drew heavily on, and reflected information contained in, several national assessments on the education sector that were undertaken by the Government of Jamaica, in collaboration with development partners. Chief among these assessments were:

- Jamaica Education Transformation Commission Report 2021 (https://opm.gov.jm/wp-content/uploads/flipbook/jetc-reform-of-education-in-jamaica-2021-abridged/)
- Students Reimagine the Jamaican Education System Report 2021 (https://www.unicef.org/jamaica/reports/students-reimagine-jamaican-education-system)
- The Public Expenditure Review on Education 2021 (https://mof.gov.jm/wp-content/uploads/Public-Expenditure-Review-of-the-Education-Sector-in-Jamaica-2.pdf?cid=lac_tt_caribbean_en_ext)
- Medium-Term Socio-Economic Policy Framework 2021 – 2024 under Vision 2030 Jamaica
- Voluntary National Review of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2022

The consultations held with teachers and their outcomes were considered alongside the previously completed reports mentioned above and the main issues and ideas included in Jamaica's Commitment Statement reflects the voices of key stakeholders including students, teachers, education administrators, academia, youth and the private sector.

Section 2:

About the National TES Consultations

The online consultations supported inclusive dialogue and meaningful engagement with over 900 teachers

Tools used included: Zoom, Zoom Chat, Mentimeter and an Online Survey

Six online consultations were held via Zoom with over 900 teachers from early childhood, primary and secondary schools as well as schools focused on children with disabilities and special needs in urban and rural areas and other towns/other urban centres. (See Appendix 2 for the Programmes/Agendas.)

The main objectives of the consultations were to allow teachers to share their visions, perspectives and thoughts on the strategic reimagining of education in Jamaica between now and 2030 as the country seeks to transform its education sector as part of its sustainable development agenda.

The consultations incorporated a range of approaches and methodologies as follows:

- **An Online Quantitative Survey** (See Appendix 3 for the online survey) – the link can be accessed here: https://www.emailmeform.com/builder/form/f239418a4eSnco3t. The 35-question survey was designed to capture teachers' views on teaching, the teaching profession, their job satisfaction, their role in the classroom, and various aspects of their schools, as well as their thoughts on their futures in education, the future of education in general and the impact of COVID-19.

4. **A Situational Analysis of the Education Sector** that began in the **first session** with the use of the interactive tool Mentimeter. Using this tool, teachers considered the following seven topics:
   - Topic #1: General State of Jamaica's Education Sector
   - Topic #2: The School Environment
   - Topic #3: Inclusiveness and Equity
   - Topic #4: The Role and Importance of Teachers/Issues and Challenges
   - Topic #5: The Profile of Jamaica's Teachers
   - Topic #6: ICT and Digital Transformation
   - Topic #7: COVID-19

   - This led to the development of recommendations for the transformation of the education system in Jamaica and the needs of the sector as well as the requirements to achieve SDG 4.

5. **Consideration of the five Thematic Action Tracks of the Transforming Education Summit (TES) –** that occurred in **a second interactive session.** Participants brainstormed using Polling, again through Mentimeter, to assess the importance and priority of each of the proposed initiatives under 4 of the 5 thematic tracks. Using Polling, each participant reviewed the proposed initiatives and voted for their top 3 priorities under four of the five tracks that they believe are most critical for Jamaica to implement as a means of transforming the country's education system, and which must be prioritized now. Focus was not placed on Track 5, financing for education, since the Public Expenditure Review on Education, completed in 2021, focused extensively on financing education. The decision was therefore taken to spend more time discussing the four other thematic tracks. The results of the individual polling exercised was then pooled to show the consensus of the group.

6. Teachers also engaged in general discussions that provided additional information, context and examples related to the results of the interactive sessions. The use of Zoom also allowed persons to place comments and feedback using the chat with all feedback being incorporated accordingly.

Together, these also informed recommendations on the way forward for education in Jamaica.

Section 3:
Analysis of the Teacher Online Survey

Teachers' Views on Teaching, the Teaching Profession, Job Satisfaction, Their Role in the Classroom, Their Schools, Their Future in Education, the Future of Education in General, and the Impact of COVID-19

Some Quick Facts:

- Of the 930 persons attending the consultations, 349 persons, or 37.5% of teachers participating in the consultations completed the survey.

Education Level	Number of Teachers Completing Survey
Early Childhood (total)	186
• Basic School[4]	113
• Infant School	57
• Pre-School	16
Primary	94
Secondary	54
Special Education	5
Community College	2
Practice Teacher	2
Guidance Counsellor	1
Total	349
Location of My School	**Number of Teachers Completing Survey**
Urban Area	103
Rural Area	232
Other Town/Oher Urban Centre	14
Total	349

Of the teachers completing the survey, 53.3% were early childhood educators, while 46.7% were primary, secondary or special education teachers. Close to 30% of participants were from urban areas and 66% from rural areas. The online survey consisted of 35 statements. Respondents were

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[4] Early childhood education in Jamaica is delivered through community-based, government-supported basic schools, government-run infant departments in primary and all-age schools, and kindergartens or pre-schools in privately owned preparatory schools.

asked to indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with each of the 35 statements using a scale from 1 to 5 (with 5: strongly agree; 4: agree, 3: neutral, 2: disagree, 1: strongly disagree).

In undertaking the analysis of the survey, each statement was categorized under one of the following eight topics/areas:

1. About Me and My Love for Teaching
2. My Future in Teaching
3. My Teaching Methods and Pedagogy
4. My ICT Skills
5. My School
6. Resources at My School
7. My Students and their Futures
8. The Impact of COVID-19 on Educational Outcomes at my School

Using strongly agree, with a response score of 60% or above as the benchmark of good results/outcomes in the education system, the analysis revealed the following:

- Teachers care about their students.
- Schools are supportive of their students.
- Schools strongly discourage acts of bullying of any kind.
- Teachers feel that their students' socioemotional development is as important as their academic development.

Overall Key Findings:

While merging strongly agree and agree scores paints an overall good picture of the education system, it also reveals areas that are in need of improvement as well as weaknesses in the system. Thus, using strongly agree, with a response score below 50% as an indicator of need for improvement, in the education system, the analysis revealed the following:

- Teachers want more professional development opportunities.
- Teachers want higher levels of job satisfaction, and this includes wanting to feel better supported in the classroom.
- There is need for greater levels of incorporation of teacher-student collaboration to facilitate better learning experiences.
- Teachers need to use a wider range of teaching and assessment methods.
- Teachers want to enhance their digital capabilities and skills.
- Teachers do not really consider themselves highly proficient in the use of ICT for teaching and learning.
- There is need for schools to promote greater awareness and understanding of the causes of gender-based violence.
- There is need for schools to place greater value on critical and creative thinking.
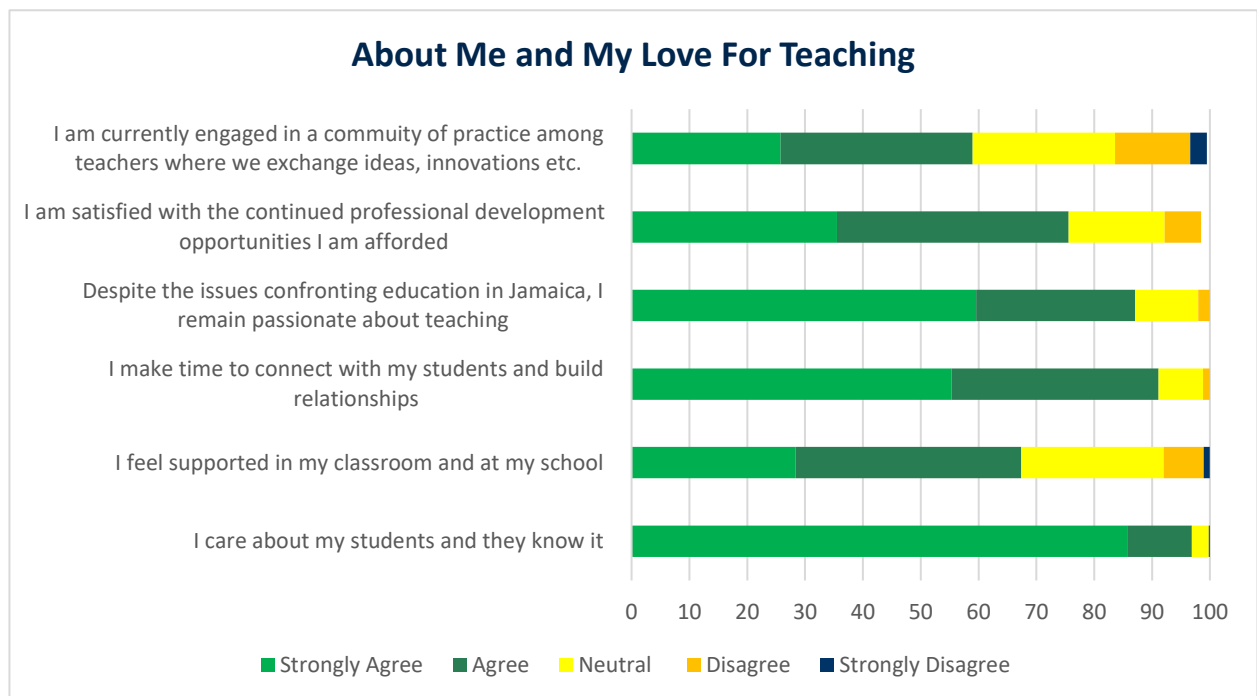- Resources need to be more fairly distributed within and across schools.

- Schools need to engage in additional activities to promote greater awareness of climate change/action and environmental issues
- There is a need for schools to scale up the promotion of wellness – mental, emotional, physical and spiritual

The full results of the survey are presented below.

Statements Presented - About Me and My Love for Teaching

Teachers were asked to indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with each of the following statements below using a scale from 1 to 5 (with 5: strongly agree; 4: agree, 3: neutral, 2: disagree, 1: strongly disagree)

1. I care about my students, and they know it.
2. I feel supported in my classroom and at my school.
3. I make time to connect with my students and build relationships.
4. Despite the issues confronting education and the socioeconomic issues and challenges facing Jamaica which impact our education system, I am passionate about teaching.
5. I am satisfied with the continued professional development opportunities I am afforded.
6. I am currently engaged in a community of practice among teachers and other educators through peer-learning spaces where we exchange and share ideas, innovations and experimentations, and our professional needs.

About Me and My Love For Teaching

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am currently engaged in a commuity of practice among teachers where we exchange ideas, innovations etc.					
I am satisfied with the continued professional development opportunities I am afforded					
Despite the issues confronting education in Jamaica, I remain passionate about teaching					
I make time to connect with my students and build relationships					
I feel supported in my classroom and at my school					
I care about my students and they know it					

Legend: ■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree

Main Takeaways - Overall most teachers revealed a sense of caring for their students, felt passionate about teaching, and valued establishing positive student-teacher relationships.

Teachers at the early childhood level felt more supported at their schools and are involved in communities of practice but felt they would benefit from additional professional development opportunities in comparison to teachers at the primary and secondary levels.
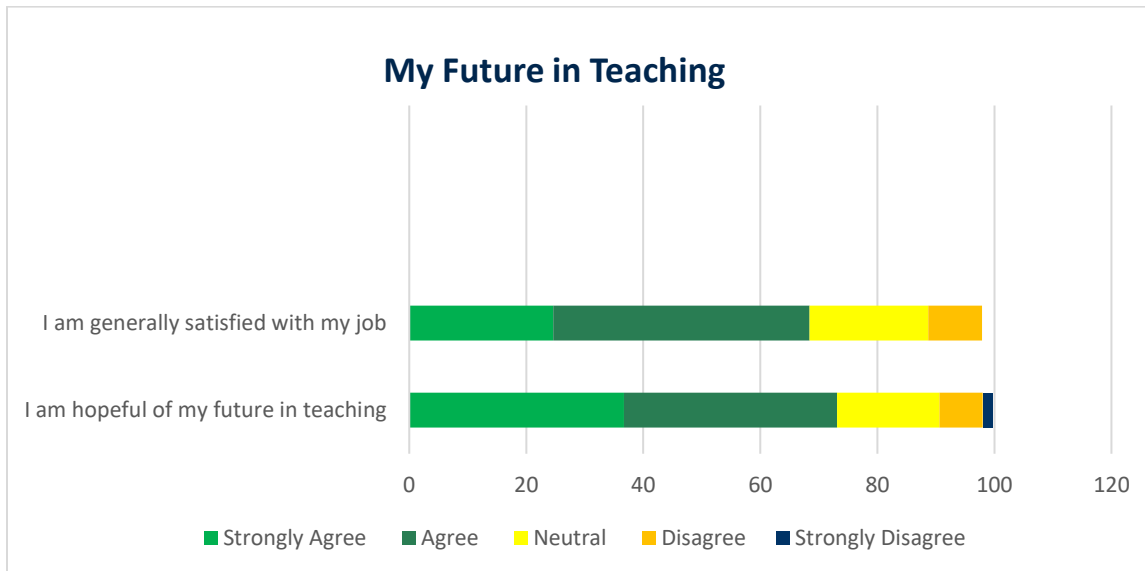
- 85.7% of teachers strongly agreed that they cared for their students and that their students are aware of this.
- 87.1% of teachers either strongly agreed or agreed that despite the issues confronting education and the socioeconomic issues and challenges facing Jamaica which impact the education system, they are still passionate about teaching.
- 91% of respondents indicated that they either strongly agreed or agreed that they make time to connect with their students and build relationships.
- 67.4% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they felt supported at their school. At the primary and secondary level, only 18% of respondents strongly agreed with this statement, while at the early childhood level 37.6% of respondents strongly agreed.
- 75.6% of teachers either strongly agreed or agreed that they were satisfied with the professional development opportunities that they are provided with. At the primary and secondary levels, 43% of respondents strongly agreed with this statement while at the early childhood level, 29% of respondents strongly agreed with this statement.
- 69% of respondents indicated that they are currently engaged in a community of practice among teachers and other educators through peer-to-peer learning spaces where they exchange and share ideas, innovations and experimentations, and general professional needs. At the early childhood level, 52% of respondents strongly agreed with this statement while at the primary and secondary levels, 41.7% of respondents strongly agreed with the statement.

Statements Presented - My Future in Teaching

Teachers were asked to indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with each of the following statements below using a scale from 1 to 5 (with 5: strongly agree; 4: agree, 3: neutral, 2: disagree, 1: strongly disagree)

1. I am hopeful of my future in teaching.
2. I am generally satisfied with my job.
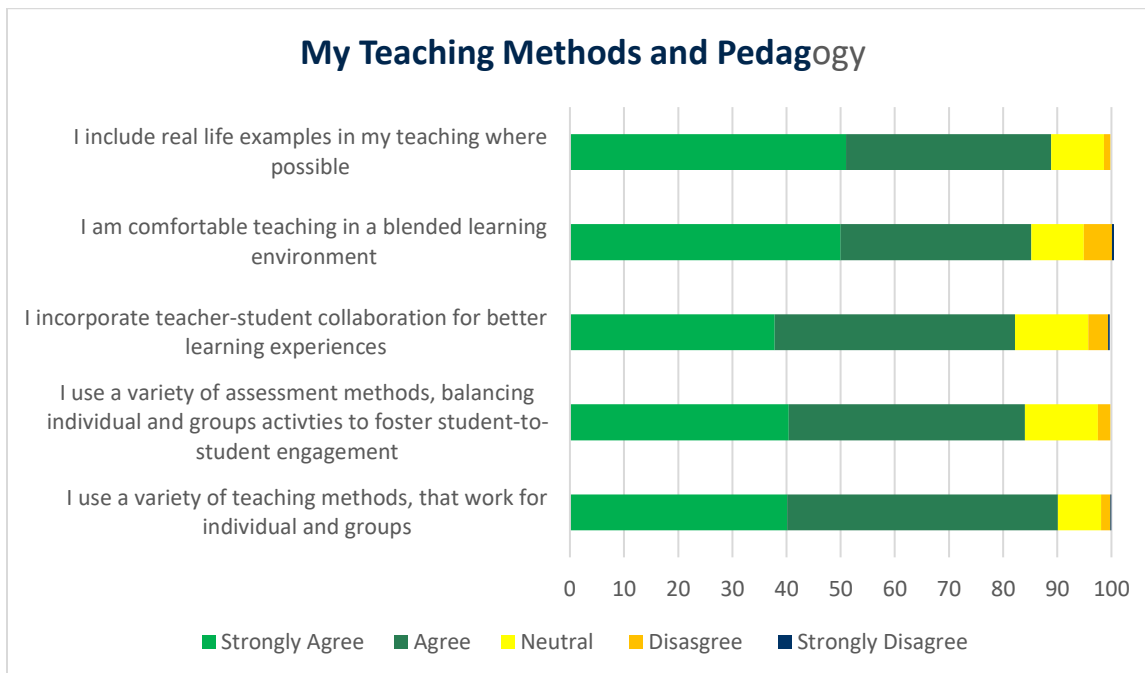
My Future in Teaching

Main Takeaways - Teachers at the Early Childhood level revealed greater job satisfaction and were overall more hopeful about their futures in teaching.

- 68.4% of respondents indicated that they either strongly agreed or agreed that they were generally satisfied with their job. 76% of early childhood educators indicated that they either strongly agreed or agreed that they were generally satisfied with their job, while 60.1% of primary and secondary teachers strongly agreed or agreed with this statement. However, only 17% of primary and secondary school teachers strongly agreed with the statement, with 31.2% of early childhood educators strongly agreed with the statement.

- 73.1% of respondents indicated they strongly agree or agree that they are hopeful about their future in teaching, with 79% of respondents in early childhood education strongly agreeing or agreeing with this statement as well as 66% of respondents at the primary and secondary level. However, only 27.6% of respondents at the primary and secondary level indicated that they strongly agreed with the statement that they were hopeful about their future in teaching. This is a sharp contrast to early childhood educators, where close to 45% of respondents indicated that they strongly agreed with the statement.

Teachers were asked to indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with each of the following statements below using a scale from 1 to 5 (with 5: strongly agree; 4: agree, 3: neutral, 2: disagree, 1: strongly disagree)

1. I use a variety of teaching methods that work for individuals and groups and incorporate different learning styles.
2. I use a variety of assessment methods, balancing individual, and group activities to foster student-to-student engagement.
3. I incorporate teacher-student collaboration for better learning experiences.
4. I am comfortable teaching in a blended learning environment.
5. I include real life examples in my teaching where possible.

My Teaching Methods and Pedagogy

I include real life examples in my teaching where possible

I am comfortable teaching in a blended learning environment

I incorporate teacher-student collaboration for better learning experiences

I use a variety of assessment methods, balancing individual and groups activties to foster student-to-student engagement

I use a variety of teaching methods, that work for individual and groups

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disasgree ■ Strongly Disagree

<u>Main Takeaways</u> - The majority of teachers noted the use of a variety of instructional and assessment methods, including collaboration, the use of real-life examples particularly at the early childhood level. Significant comfort with the use of a blended teaching and learning was also widely expressed.

*   90% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they used a variety of teaching methods that work for individuals and groups.
*   84% of teachers strongly agreed or agreed that they use a variety of assessment methods balancing individual and group activities to foster student-to-student engagement.
*   82% of teachers strongly agreed or agreed that they incorporate teacher-student collaboration for better learning experiences.

- 85% of teachers strongly agreed or agreed that they were comfortable teaching in a blended learning environment.
- 89% of teachers strongly agreed or agreed that they use real-life examples in teaching where possible. This was 95% for early childhood educators.

Statements Presented - My ICT Skills

Teachers were asked to indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with each of the following statements below using a scale from 1 to 5 (with 5: strongly agree; 4: agree, 3: neutral, 2: disagree, 1: strongly disagree)

1. I am comfortable with using ICT in teaching and learning.
2. I am highly proficient with using ICT in teaching and learning.
3. I need to enhance my digital capability and skills.

My ICT Skills
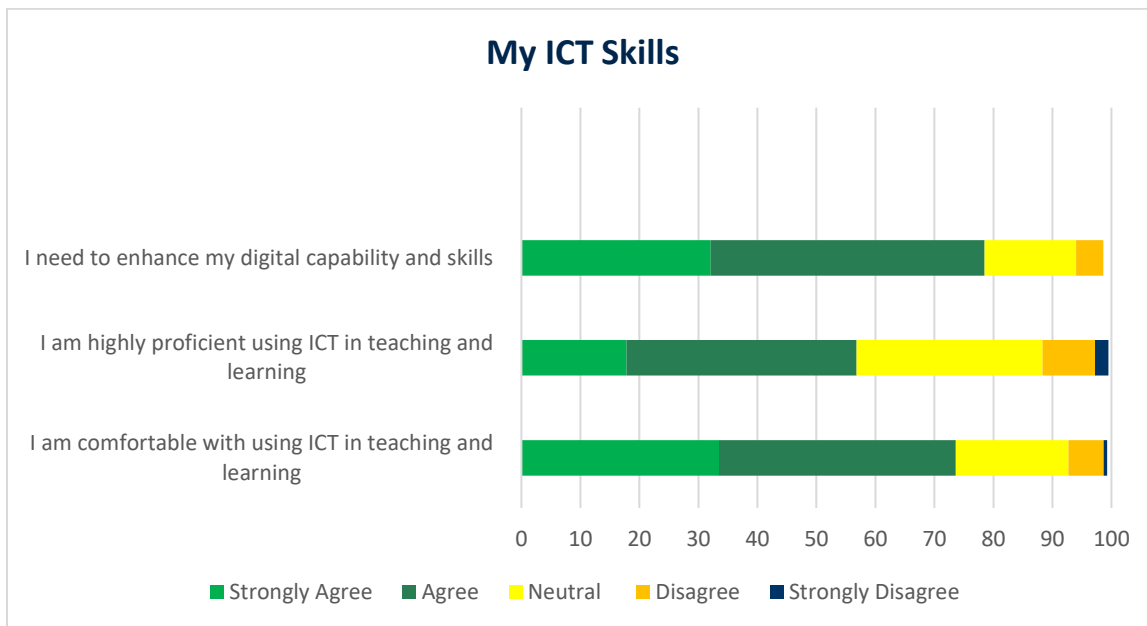
Main Takeaways - Teachers at the primary and secondary level expressed greater levels of comfort and proficiency with the use of ICT when compared with those at the early childhood level. Although expressing some levels of comfort with blended approaches and using ICTs for teaching and learning, teachers still felt the need to improve their skillsets.

- 73.6% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they were comfortable using ICT in teaching and learning, while 17.8% of respondents strongly agreed that they were highly proficient using ICT in teaching and learning, with 77.5% of respondents indicating that they strongly agreed or agree that they need to enhance their digital capability and skills. Some 31.5% of respondents were neutral or unsure of their proficiency in using ICT in teaching and learning.
- 79% of teachers in early childhood education strongly agreed or agreed that they needed to enhance their digital capability and skills while 90% of teachers at the primary and
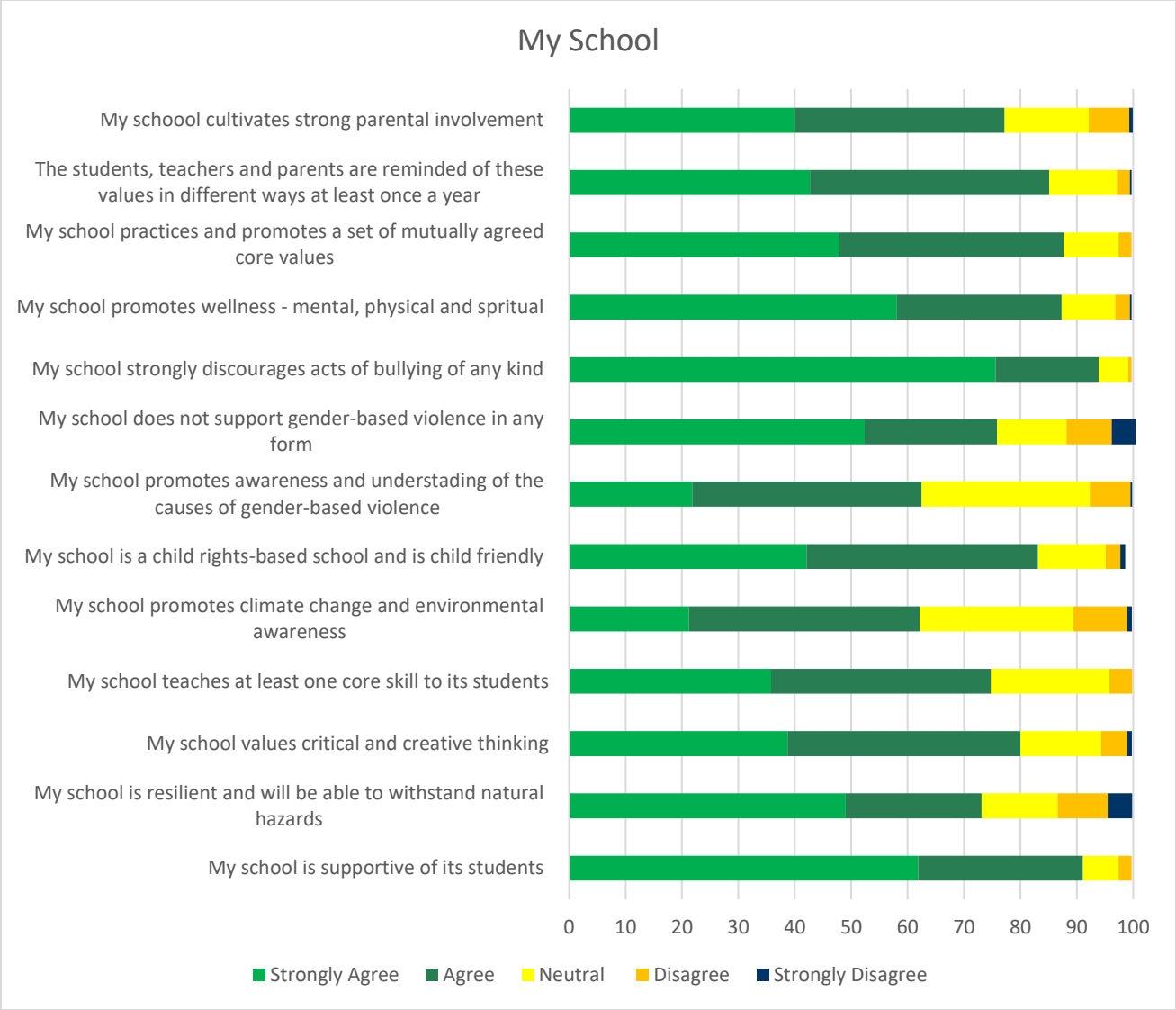
secondary level strongly agreed or agreed that they need to enhance their digital capability and skills.

- In terms of proficiency, 48% of teachers from the early childhood education sector strongly agreed or agreed that they were proficient in using ICT in teaching and learning, while 40% remained neutral. 67% of teachers in primary and secondary schools strongly agreed or agreed with this statement related to proficiency.
- 66% of respondents at the early childhood level agreed or strongly agreed that they were comfortable with using ICT in teaching and learning, while at the primary and secondary levels, 83% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with this statement.

Statements Presented - My School

Teachers were asked to indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with each of the following statements below using a scale from 1 to 5 (with 5: strongly agree; 4: agree, 3: neutral, 2: disagree, 1: strongly disagree)

1. My school is supportive of its students.
2. My school is resilient will be able to withstand natural hazards such as hurricanes and earthquakes.
3. My school values critical and creative thinking.
4. My school teaches at least one core skill to our students.
5. My school promotes climate change and environmental awareness.
6. My school is a child rights-based school and is child friendly.
7. My school promotes awareness and understanding of the causes of gender-based violence.
8. My school does not support gender-based violence in any form.
9. My school strongly discourages acts of bullying of any kind.
10. My school promotes wellness – mental, physical and spiritual.
11. My school practices and promotes a set of mutually agreed core values.
12. The students, teachers and parents are reminded of these values in different ways at least once a year.

My School

Statement	
My schoool cultivates strong parental involvement	
The students, teachers and parents are reminded of these values in different ways at least once a year	
My school practices and promotes a set of mutually agreed core values	
My school promotes wellness - mental, physical and spritual	
My school strongly discourages acts of bullying of any kind	
My school does not support gender-based violence in any form	
My school promotes awareness and understading of the causes of gender-based violence	
My school is a child rights-based school and is child friendly	
My school promotes climate change and environmental awareness	
My school teaches at least one core skill to its students	
My school values critical and creative thinking	
My school is resilient and will be able to withstand natural hazards	
My school is supportive of its students	

Legend: ■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree

Main Takeaways - The majority of teachers felt their schools to be child friendly, safe, supportive of student holistic development and encouraging of parental involvement.

- 91% of teachers either strongly agreed or agreed that their school was supportive of its students.
- 38.7% of teachers strongly agreed that their school values critical thinking, with 41% of teachers agreeing with this statement, and 12% of respondents being neutral to this statement.
- 42% of respondents strongly agreed that their school is child rights based and child friendly, with another 41% of respondents agreeing with this statement.
- 75.6% of respondents strongly agreed that their school strongly discourages acts of bullying of any kind. At the early childhood level, 96% of respondents strongly agreed or

agreed that their school discourages all acts of bullying, while at the primary and secondary level, 70.5% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with this statement.

- While 52.4% of respondents strongly agreed that their school does not support gender-based violence in any form, only 21.8% of respondents strongly agreed that their school promotes awareness and understanding of the causes of gender-based violence. At the primary and secondary levels, only 8.6% of respondents strongly agree that their school promotes awareness and understanding of gender-based violence, with 47.2% of respondents at this level indicating that their school does not support gender-based violence in any form.
- Although 49% of respondents strongly agreed that their school would be able to withstand natural hazards, only 21.2% of respondents strongly agreed that their school promotes awareness of climate change and environmental issues.
- 87.3% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their school promotes mental, spiritual and physical wellness.
- Close to 88% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their school promotes a set of mutually agreed core values.
- 35.8% of respondents strongly agreed that their school teaches at least one core skill to its students, while about 75% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. At the primary and secondary levels, 75% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with this statement.
- 72% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that that their school cultivates strong parental involvement.

Statements Presented - Resources at My School

Teachers were asked to indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with each of the following statements below using a scale from 1 to 5 (with 5: strongly agree; 4: agree, 3: neutral, 2: disagree, 1: strongly disagree)

1. My school offers academic and extra curricula activities led by teachers.
2. At my school resources are fairly evenly distributed.

Resources at My School

At my school resources are fairly-evenly distributed

My school offers academic and extra curricula activities led by teachers

Legend: ■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree

X-axis: 0, 20, 40, 60, 80, 100
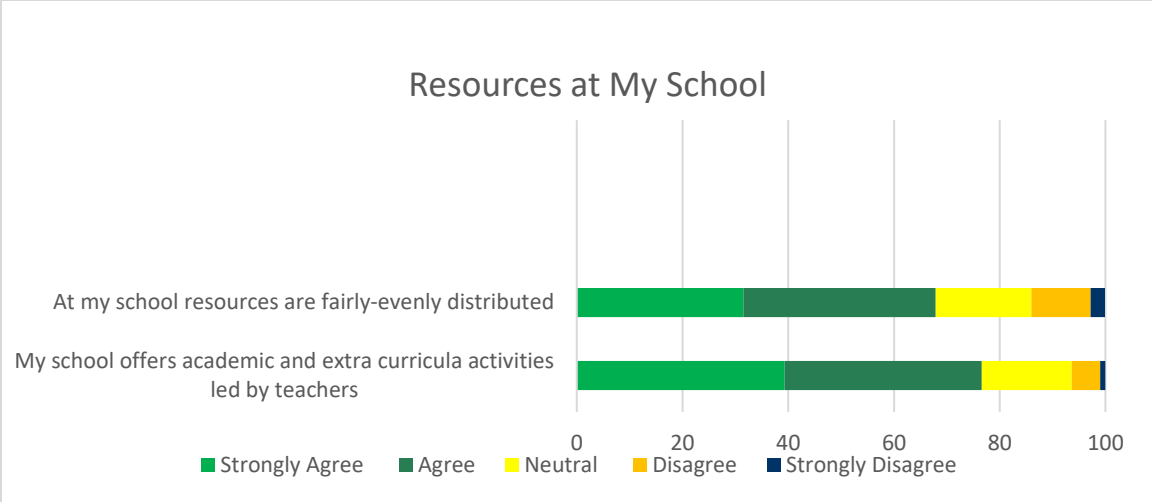
Main Takeaways - The majority of respondents agreed that their schools offered after school/ extra-curricular activities and that resources were fairly evenly distributed overall, although the latter point was significantly more supported by teachers at the early childhood level.

- 31.5% of respondents strongly agreed that resources are fairly-evenly distributed in their school. A total of 68% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that resources are fairly-evenly distributed at their school. At the early childhood level, 75% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that resources were fairly distributed, while at primary and secondary schools, 42.3% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement with only 11% of this number strongly agreeing.
- 77% of teachers strongly agreed or agreed that their school offers academic and extra curricula activities led by teachers.

Statements Presented - My Students and their Future

Teachers were asked to indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with each of the following statements below using a scale from 1 to 5 (with 5: strongly agree; 4: agree, 3: neutral, 2: disagree, 1: strongly disagree)

1. I feel my students' socioemotional development is as important as their academic development.
2. I feel students at my school will be well prepared to enter the world of work later in life.
3. I feel hopeful about my students' futures.

My Students and theirFutures
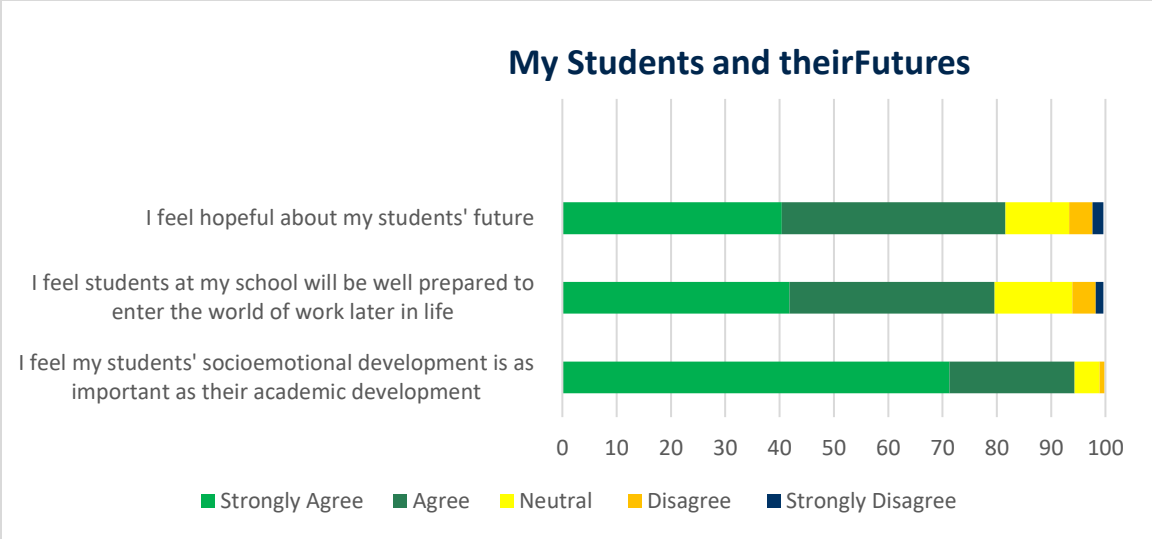
Main Takeaways - The majority of teachers feel hopeful about their students' futures and that their socioemotional development was as critical as their academic growth and performance.

- About 80% of teachers strongly agreed or agreed that they are hopeful for their students' futures, with 80% also indicating that they either strongly agreed or agreed that their students will be well prepared to enter the world of work later in life.
- 71.3% of respondents strongly agreed that they felt that their students' socioemotional development was as important as their academic development.

Teachers were asked to indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with each of the following statements below using a scale from 1 to 5 (with 5: strongly agree; 4: agree, 3: neutral, 2: disagree, 1: strongly disagree)

1. The impact of COVID-19 on educational outcomes at my school was significant.

Tne Impact of COVID-19

The impact of COVID-19 on educational outcomes at my school was significant

0   20   40   60   80   100

■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree
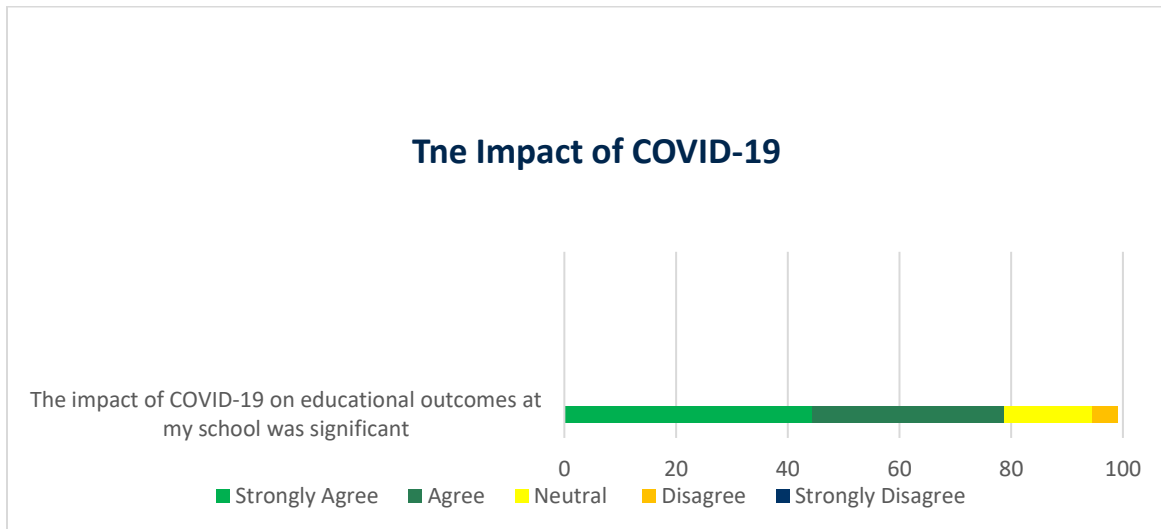
Main Takeaways - COVID-19 was seen to have a substantial impact on educational outcomes by most respondents, across all levels of the system.

- Close to 79% of respondents indicated that the impact of COVID-19 on the educational outcomes of their school was significant with 15.5% of respondent remaining neutral on the topic and 4.6% of respondents strongly disagreeing.

Section 4:
Situational Analysis of Jamaica's Education System:
The Perspectives of Jamaica's Teachers and their Recommendations for Defining a New Education Landscape for Jamaica

Analysis undertaken by teachers based on their in-depth knowledge and understanding of the education sector as well as their experiences

Using Mentimeter – an interactive online tool that helps with participant engagement and enables every voice in a "room" to be heard - teachers explored the current state of Jamaica's education system around seven topics underpinned by a total of 30 statements, and shared their in-depth knowledge of the sector, their experiences, views, and perceptions. Following the Mentimeter exercise teachers extrapolated on some of the topics and explained the results/overarching responses that emerged from the Mentimeter exercises.

Specifically, the use of Mentimeter, facilitated the collection of shared views and consensus around the following seven topics:

- Topic #1: General State of Jamaica's Education Sector
- Topic #2: The School Environment
- Topic #3: Inclusiveness and Equity
- Topic #4: The Role and Importance of Teachers/Issues and Challenges
- Topic #5: The Profile of Jamaica's Teachers
- Topic #6: ICT and Digital Transformation
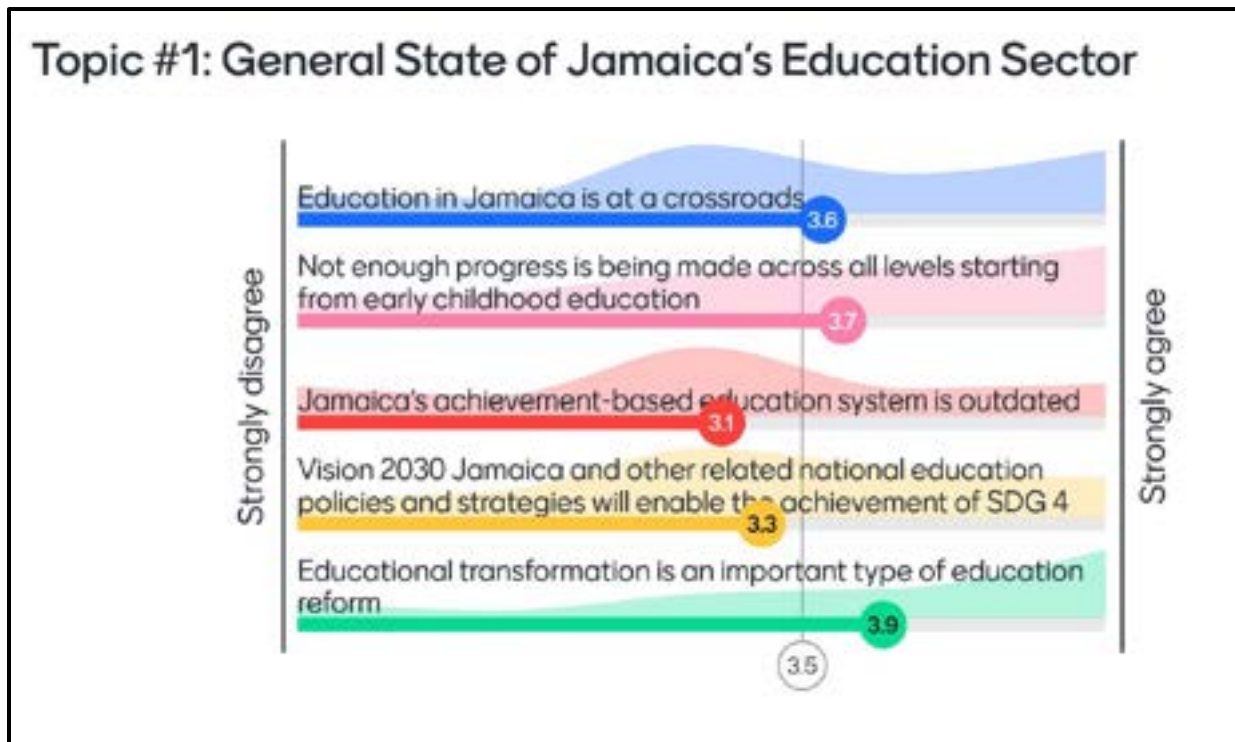- Topic #7: COVID-19

Under each of the seven topics, teachers were provided with a set of statements to indicate how strongly they agreed or disagree with each of the statements using a scale from 1 to 5 (with 5: strongly agree; 4: agree, 3: neutral, 2: disagree, 1: strongly disagree).

Following this exercise, teachers engaged in lively and engaging discussions, providing a range of recommendations to address the issues in Jamaica's education system and approaches to accelerate SDG 4.

Topic #1: General State of Jamaica's Education Sector

The statements provided were:
1. Education in Jamaica is at a crossroads.
2. Not enough progress is being made across all levels starting from early childhood education.
3. Jamaica's achievement-based education system is outdated.
4. Vision 2030 Jamaica – National Development Plan and other related national education policies and strategies will enable the achievement of SDG 4 (Quality Education and Training) in Jamaica.
5. Educational transformation is an important type of education reform.

Topic #1: General State of Jamaica's Education Sector

Education in Jamaica is at a crossroads — 3.6

Not enough progress is being made across all levels starting from early childhood education — 3.7

Jamaica's achievement-based education system is outdated — 3.1

Vision 2030 Jamaica and other related national education policies and strategies will enable the achievement of SDG 4 — 3.3

Educational transformation is an important type of education reform — 3.9

3.5

Overall, the group/participants neither strongly agreed nor disagreed that Jamaica's education system is in a good state. **The average score for all responses was 3.5/5,** with teachers moving closer to strongly agreeing that not enough progress is being made across all levels of education starting with early childhood education. The most favourable response of participants was that educational transformation is an important type of educational reform.

Reimagining the Future of Education in Jamaica – Recommendations to Accelerate the Achievement of SDG 4

Teachers stressed the need for:
- Improvements across all levels of the education system.

- Addressing the issues at the lower levels of education so that students are better able to transition from primary school to high school.
- Greater levels of monitoring and evaluation of the education sector, supported by data.
- Personal development of teachers which must be ongoing.
- Better understanding of student goals and their differing abilities and needs.
- Revamping of the curriculum and exam structures to cater to students of varying abilities.
- Increasing resources in schools especially in rural and farming communities.
- Understanding from schools that are engaged with their alumni, their approach as this may be an avenue for obtaining resources and other forms of support in schools.
- The promotion of the value of education by the Government and other key stakeholders.

Quotes from the stakeholder consultations related to Topic #1 are presented below:

"The challenges in early childhood education needs to be fixed and fast tracked as this affects all grade levels"

"Early childhood education needs to be fixed if high schools are expected to provide value. At the secondary level, several students are reading below their required level"

"Education is at a crossroads as we have not identified or articulated the kind of education systems that is indigenous to Jamaica. Does our education system reflect us?"

"Education is at a crossroads because of the multiple sub-cultures that exist in Jamaica" "We need to stop normalizing bad behaviours".


"Vision 2030 Jamaica, when developed was a good framework to enable education to advance in Jamaica, not much movement since then."

Topic #2: The School Environment

The statements provided were:
1. School environments in Jamaica are physically safe.
2. School environments in Jamaica are mentally safe.
3. School environments in Jamaica are socially safe.
4. School environments in Jamaica are conducive for learning.

Topic #2: Assessment of the School Environment
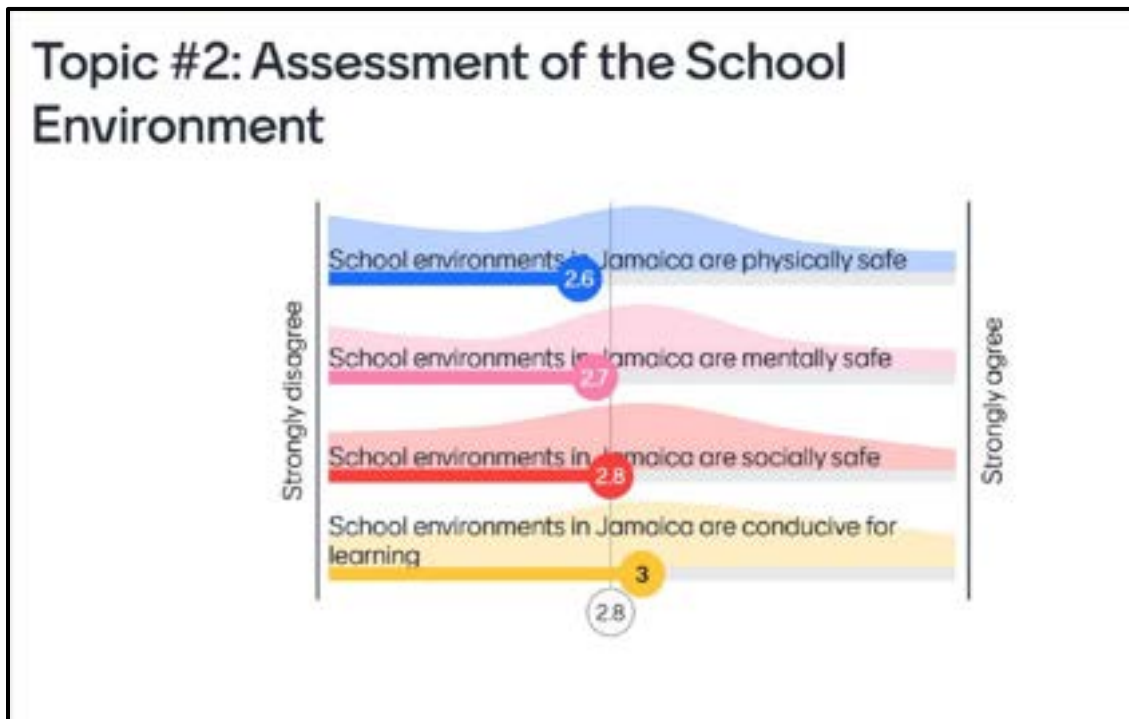
While there was more agreement on the school environment itself being conducive for learning, teachers bemoaned the fact that school environments were not necessary physically, mentally, or socially safe. **The average score for Topic #2 was 2.8/5.**

Reimagining the Future of Education in Jamaica – Recommendations to Accelerate the Achievement of SDG 4

Teachers indicated that:
- They as teachers are contributing to the school environment not being mentally safe as there are instances when teachers bully their students through their words and comments to their students not fully understanding the power of the spoken word.
- While corporal punishment has been largely removed in schools, it needs to be fully removed to improve the mental health and safety of schools.
- The social ills such as crime and violence that are permeating the society and country needs to be urgently addressed as this is contributing to children's poor emotional state resulting in the increases incidence of aggression and violence in schools.

- There is need for a campaign on education so that society can better understand the importance of education.
- There is need for more resources to address children with special needs – there is need for early assessments and special needs assessment centres across the island so that issues that emerge can be addressed quickly.
- A values and attitudes programme needs to be introduced across the country to remove some of the new norms and bad behaviours permeating society and provide students and young persons with good principles and practices that they can emulate.
- Early childhood institutions are sometimes neglected and because of this many are ill-equipped to effectively teach students.
- Even though aspects of the school environment are conducive for learning, there is room for improvement. Teachers cited the example of classrooms in primary schools occupying shared space, which is distracting to both teachers and students, affecting the quality of teaching, and consequently learning outcomes.
- Physically schools are safe from persons/criminal elements coming onto the school compound and causing harm, but the school environment itself and the students themselves may contribute to the school not being safe through the use of violence at school, especially fighting.

Quotes from the stakeholder consultations related to Topic #2 are presented below:

"Many teachers do not understand how powerful their comments and words can be. Words can be negative."

"The Safety in Schools Policy being implemented has reduced the possibility of teachers or students getting physically hurt."

*"Teachers may encourage bullying in order to keep students in their place."*

"Teachers are making school environments more conducive to learning as they are using a variety of methods to deliver information and content to students."

Topic #3: Inclusiveness and Equity

The statements provided were:
1. Jamaica's education system is equitable.
2. Jamaica's education system is gender-transformative (using education systems to achieve gender equality).
3. Jamaica's education system is inclusive and caters to all types of learners.
4. Currently, learning and teaching resource materials exist in accessible format for children with visual, audio, and other print disabilities.
5. Teachers are trained on using teaching resource materials designed for persons with disabilities and can support a diverse range of learners.
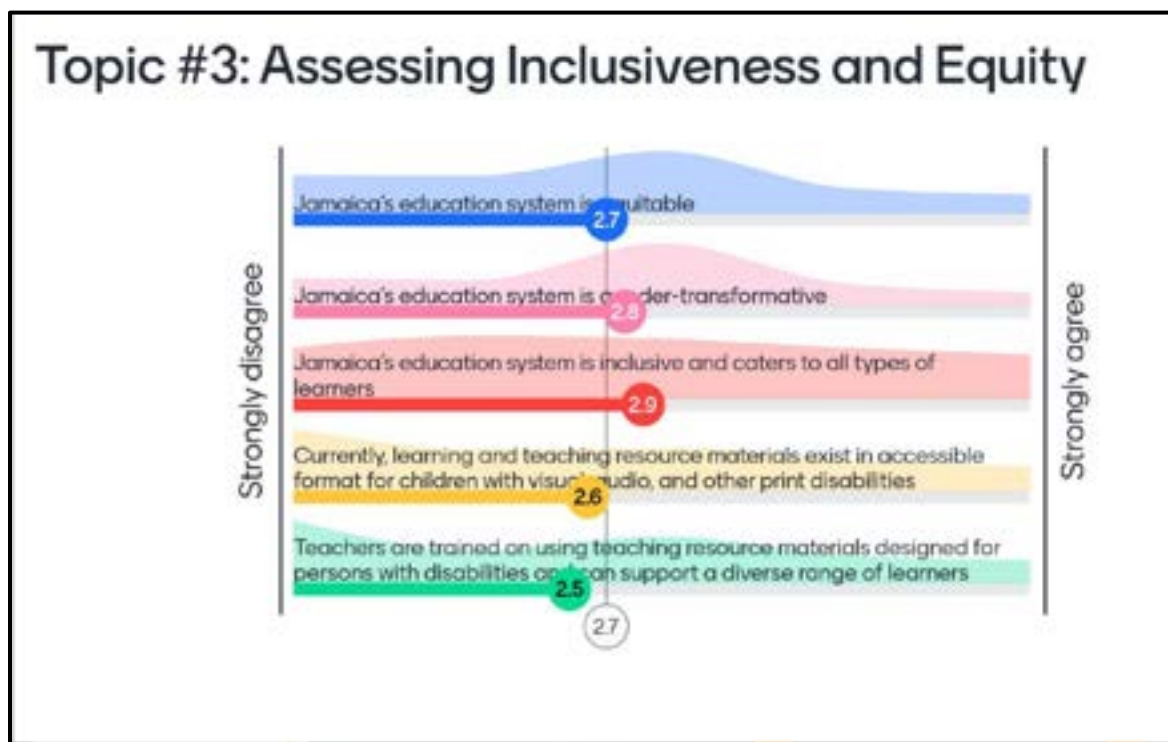
The consensus of the group tended to be moving more towards disagreeing with the statements posed as it relates to inclusiveness and equity within the education system. **The average score for this topic was 2.7/5.** Teachers indicated that in almost every classroom there are students with special needs, but their needs are not being effectively met due to limited resources. There was also mention of the need for better targeting of social protection programmes such as the Programme for Advancement through Health and Education (PATH) (a government conditional cash transfer programme) to those who need it most. Teachers indicated that many students that should benefit from PATH are not and that in many cases parents do not fully understand how to access PATH benefits for their children and are not sufficiently helped by the organizations administering these programmes.

Reimagining the Future of Education in Jamaica – Recommendations to Accelerate the Achievement of SDG 4

Teachers indicated that for schools to be more inclusive and for there to be equity, there must be:

- Accessible resources for children with disabilities.
- Fully equipped and adequately resourced schools to help students with various disabilities or different abilities.
- Well trained early childhood teachers/educators who possess not only the skills but the required tools to help special needs children, especially those in the rural areas.
- Equity and access in human, learning, teaching, and information technology resources in urban and rural schools.
- Improvements in the assessment processes to support children with learning disabilities as currently, the assessment process takes far too long and as a result, children advance grade levels but are unable to cope and many are left behind: *"When signs of disabilities are spotted, assistance or help must be provided as soon as possible."*
- Emphasis on children that are gifted and the creation of accelerated learning programmes.

Quotes from the stakeholder consultations related to Topic #3 are presented below:

"Rural schools cannot be left behind."

"There is a disparity in resources between schools especially in basic schools, primary schools get priority rather than the basic schools."

"Free education for all."

"Inclusiveness must take into account gifted children"

"Parents are often in denial about their children's learning abilities, making it difficult for teachers."

"Equip schools with what they need to support learning."

"Each school should be outfitted with at least one classroom to focus on special needs students."

*"Primary schools in rural areas need to mirror primary schools in urban areas."*

Topic #4: The Role and Importance of Teachers/Issues and Challenges

The statements provided were:

1. In Jamaica, teachers, trainers, and other education personnel are the single most influential variable in the education system for achieving learning outcomes.
2. The achievement of SDG 4 – Quality Education - and the transformation of education will depend heavily on teachers and education personnel.
3. In Jamaica, working conditions, including remuneration is deterring young persons from entering the profession and in-service teachers from remaining in it.
4. Teachers in Jamaica now participate in educational decision making- from the classroom to national policy levels.
5. Jamaica is confronted with teacher shortages in some subject areas.

Topic #4: The Role and Importance of Teachers/Issues and Challenges
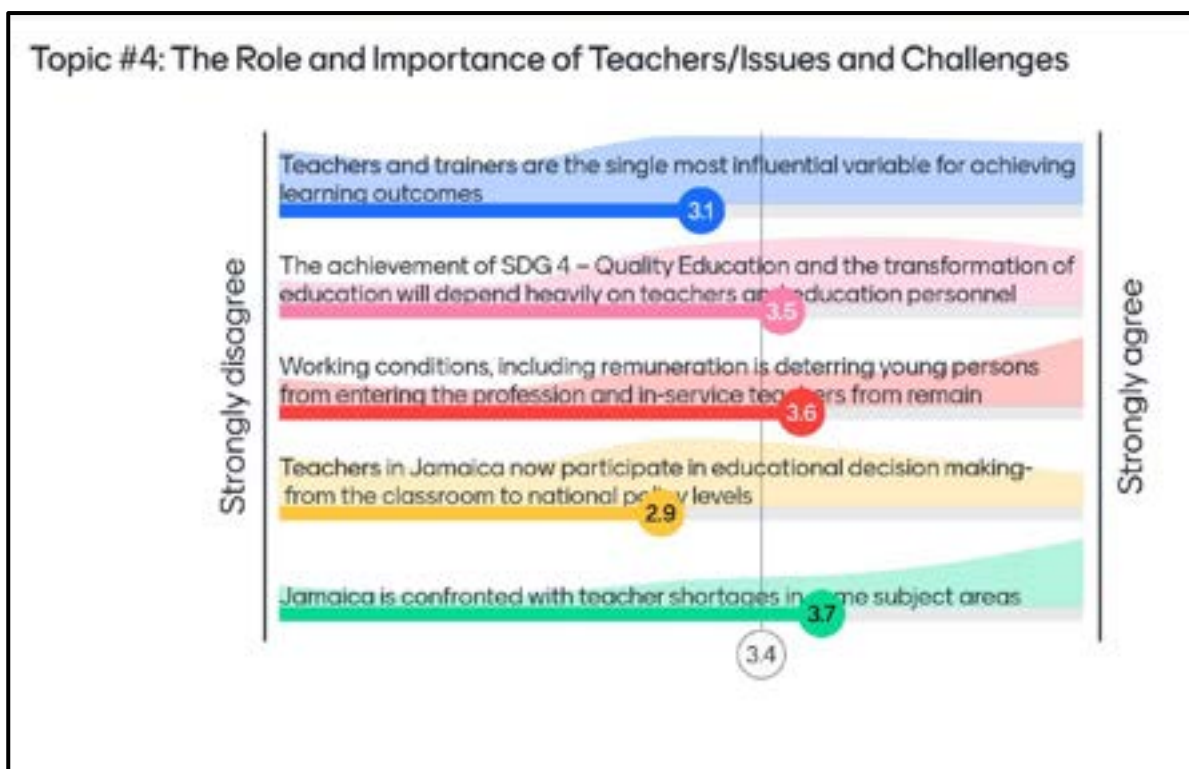
The consensus of the group tended to be moving more towards agreeing with the statements posed as it relates to the working conditions of teachers, their current participation in policy decisions related to education and the role of teachers in achieving SDG 4. **The average score for this topic was 3.4/5.** Teachers indicated that they need to be consulted more often in decision making processes concerning the education system. They were more neutral with the statement that they are the single most influential variable for achieving learning outcomes. They pointed to the importance of partnership between teachers and parents in achieving learning outcomes. Whilst teachers considered themselves key to enabling the achievement of learning outcomes and the system as a whole, they believed that parental involvement in education is key to achieving

learning outcomes. <mark>Teachers stressed the need for reaching out to parents more and finding appropriate approaches to do so. Many teachers indicated that their schools valued parental involvement and often reached out to parents, but parents are not always very responsive.</mark>

Teachers were adamant that the profession was not being recognized enough and this is contributing to how they are perceived by parents, and the lack of respect meted out to them oftentimes by parents. They also tended towards agreeing with the statement that working conditions of teachers were deterring young persons from joining the profession.

Reimagining the Future of Education in Jamaica – Recommendations to Accelerate the Achievement of SDG 4

During the consultations, teachers advocated for:

- Better and fairer treatment for teachers and the teaching profession.
- Greater levels of recognition.
- Better working conditions which would also act as an incentive to encourage younger persons to enter the teaching profession.
- More resources that would enable teachers to better perform their jobs.
- Being participants in the decision-making processes involving education assessments and policy at the national level.
- Being able to effectively participate in policy making decisions at the school and national levels.
- Increasing resources in early childhood education especially for basic schools in rural areas.

Quotes from the stakeholder consultations related to Topic #4 are presented below:

"We feel stifled because of a lack of resources."

"Teachers are not treated fairly and seek employment overseas for better opportunities."

"There should be more financial help for basic schools especially in rural areas for internet, teaching aids, etc."

"Teachers are under paid and unrecognized."

"We feel undervalued."

Topic #5: The Profile of Jamaica's Teachers

The statements provided were:
1. Jamaican teachers are empowered.
2. Jamaican teachers are well-trained and professionally qualified.
3. Jamaican teachers are motivated.
4. Jamaican teachers are supported within well-resourced systems.
5. Jamaican teachers are supported within efficient, and effective systems.
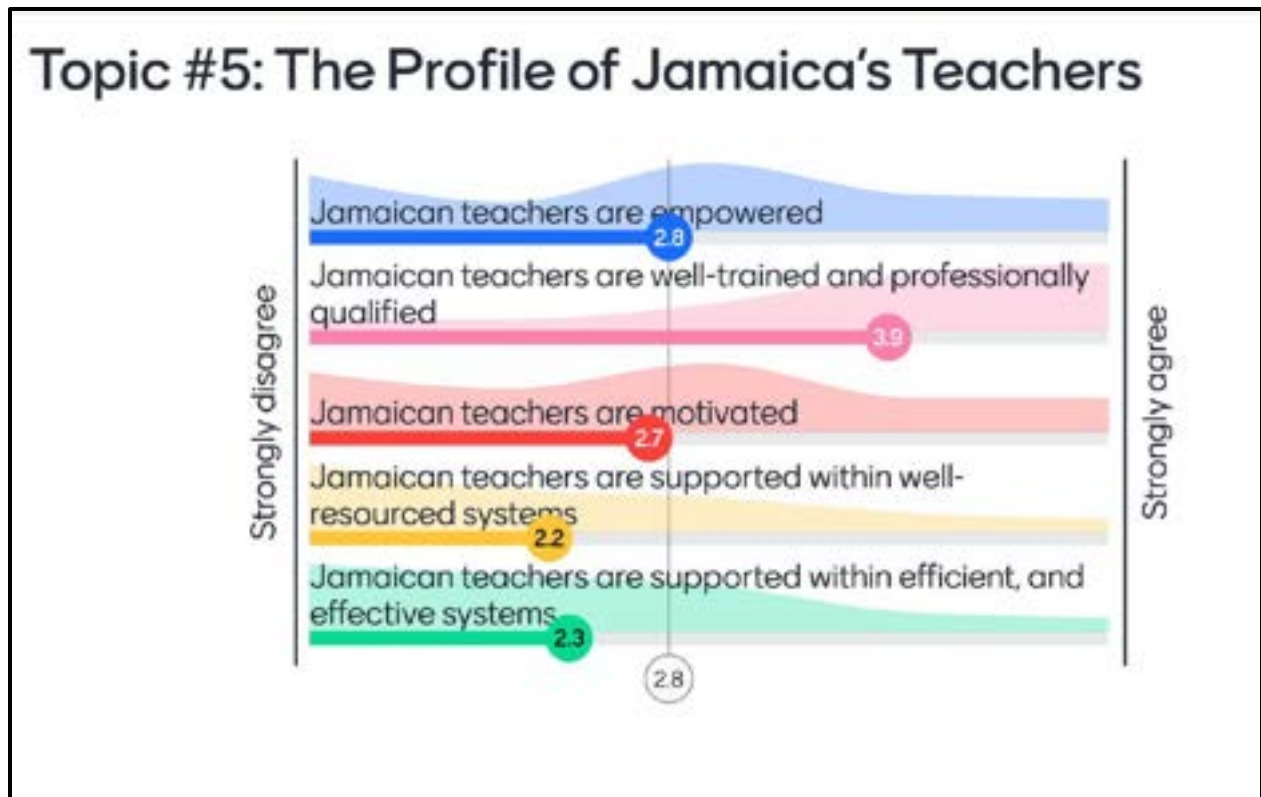
Whilst teachers agreed that many of them are well trained and qualified, many said that they were not motivated by their jobs and only stay due to their passion for teaching itself, education, learning and children. **The average score for this topic was 2.8/5.** They highlighted a few factors which they believed contributed to their low levels of motivation including:

- A general lack of adequate resources and equipment.
- Not being properly treated or recognized event though they may be well trained with university degrees.
- Low levels of parental involvement in education.
- Low levels of remuneration.
- The sheer volume of work they are required to do in one day.
- High pupil-teacher ratios.

Reimagining the Future of Education in Jamaica – Recommendations to Accelerate the Achievement of SDG 4

Teachers stressed the need for:

- Parental involvement in education with parents at home playing their part in helping with their children's education.
- Building the capacity of parents and sensitizing them to their role in their children's education.
- Greater recognition of their importance by the Government and society in general
- Education and the importance of learning to be celebrated and made attractive, to help children and youth to become excited with learning and to help them strive for excellence, goals to create a better Jamaica.
- Well-resourced systems.

Quotes from the stakeholder consultations related to Topic #5 are presented below:

"We have love for teaching"

"We have a love for children."

"We have a love for education."

*"We are leaving for greener pastures due to a lack of support even though we are more qualified than ever."*

"We get frustrated as we cannot see the fruits of our hard labour."

Topic #6: ICT and Digital Transformation

The statements provided were:

1. The digital transformation and the use of technologies hold promise for expanding education access and enriching learning outcomes for more learners
2. ICT and digital spaces foster new and effective pedagogies that expand student knowledge
3. ICT and digital spaces assist lesson delivery
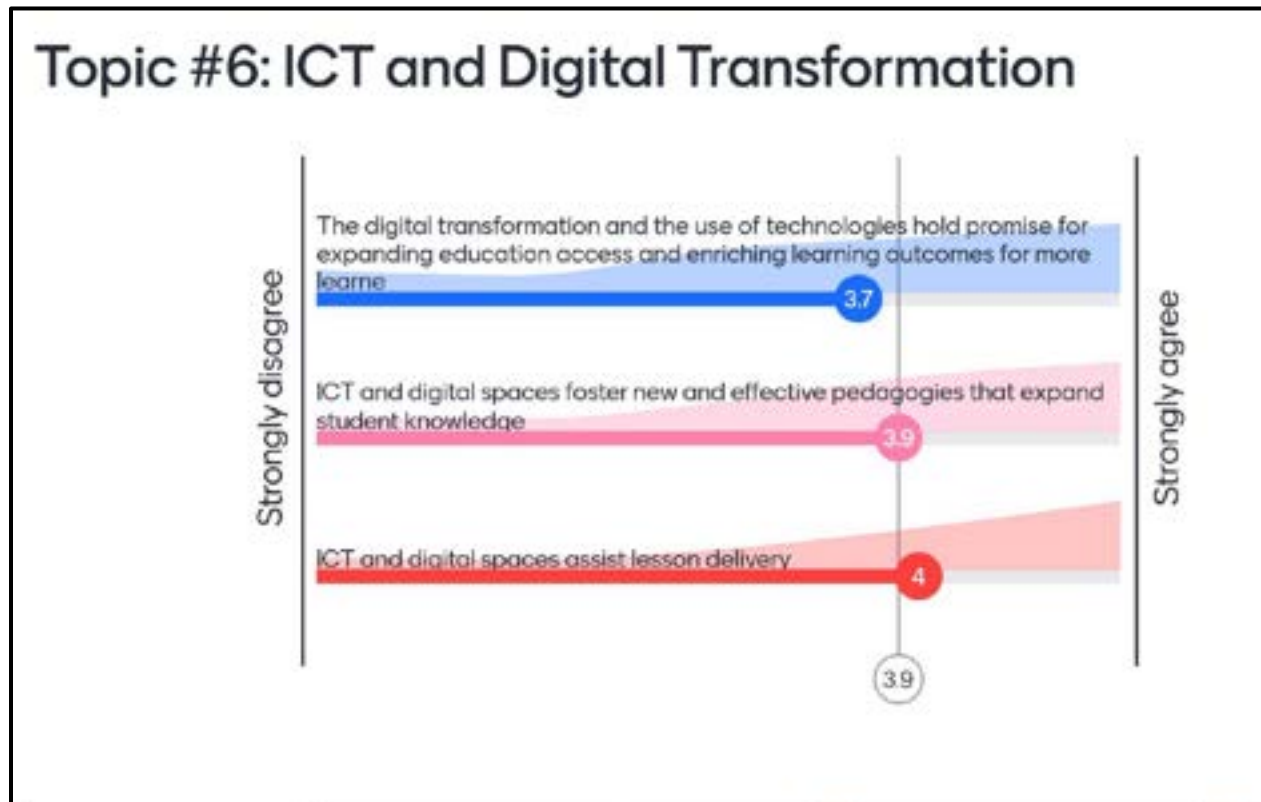
Teachers agreed that information and communication technologies (ICTs) are critical to defining the future educational landscape and are already having a positive impact on Jamaica's education system and can continue to serve as a positive enhancement to learning and teaching. **The average score for this topic was 3.9/5.** Teachers highlighted that:

- Access to technology and internet during the pandemic and during school closures were extremely limited in several areas.
- It is harder to accommodate children with disabilities when using technologies for the purpose of online learning.

Reimagining the Future of Education in Jamaica – Recommendations to Accelerate the Achievement of SDG 4

To ensure that the use of ICT supports and assist in the transformation of the education system in Jamaica, teachers suggested that:

- They need to be provided with more training opportunities to better use ICTs in teaching and learning and capitalize on their full potential.
- There has to be greater access to WIFI and the internet in communities across Jamaica.
- The wider rollout of the country's ICT infrastructure and community WIFI will have a positive impact on education.
- Increasing the use of ICT in teaching and learning will contribute to improvements in critical thinking.
- Technology should continue to be strengthened and safeguarded.
- There needs to be upskilling and retooling of teachers to meet the demands of the 21st century classrooms.

Topic #7: COVID-19

The statements provided were:
1. The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in significant learning loss in Jamaica.
2. The COVID-19 pandemic has had significant mental health and wellness impacts on students
3. Jamaica was off-track with regard to "ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all", before the pandemic
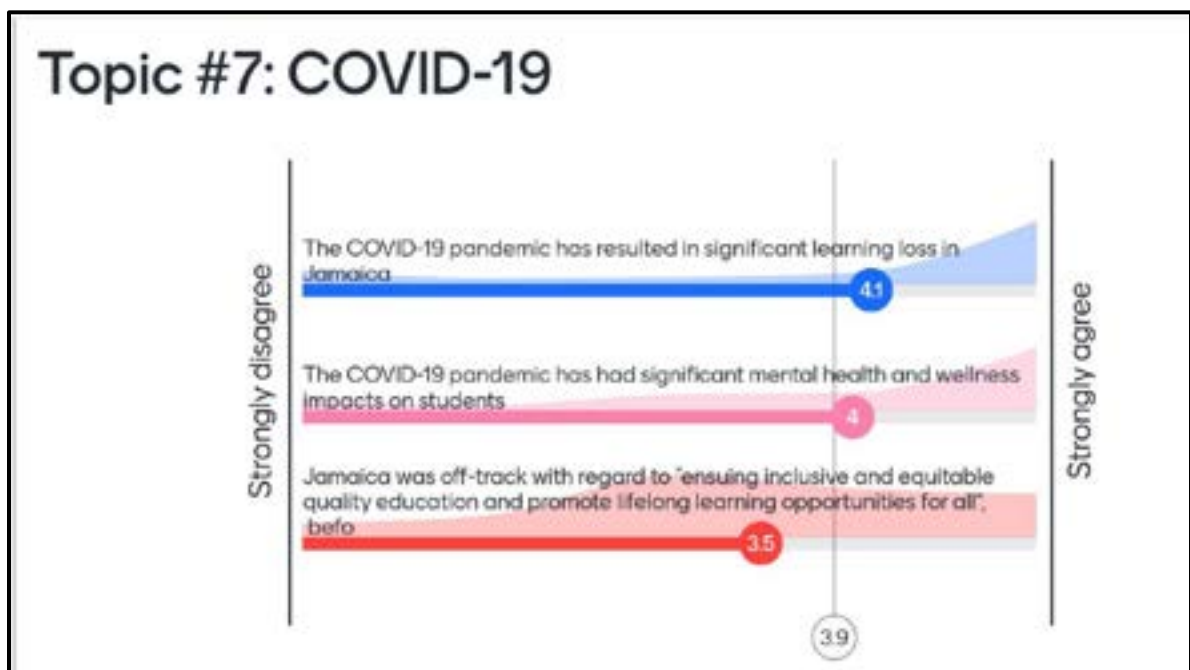
Teachers agreed that COVID-19 has caused learning loss, significantly impacted the mental health and wellness of students. **The average score for this topic was 3.4/5.** Teachers also reflected on the impact of the pandemic indicating that:

- The learning environment caused by the pandemic makes it hard to deliver content currently.
- The learning environment caused by the pandemic has made it difficult to engage with students and it is sometimes difficult for them to retain what is being taught currently.
- In some cases, teachers have had to re-teach topics that they already taught and have had to "start from scratch".

Quotes from the stakeholder consultations related to Topic #7 are presented below:

"We need to find an approach to find all students that have not returned to school since COVID-19."

"It's hard to pick up where they left off with online teaching: students were left behind, some weren't online."

20 Aspects of Current Education Policy and Practice that Teachers Say Need to be Abandoned or Changed

Policy or practice that needs to be abandoned	Policy or practice that needs to be changed/amended
1. The inclusion of students with special needs in the same classrooms with other students 2. Making basic school students pay school fees 3. Standardized assessments and "one size fits all" assessments for all students. *"Examinations need to be differentiated to fit the needs and abilities of all students."* 4. Examinations 5. The focus on passing exams. *"Lose the focus on just passing exams and rather implement a system that involves the*	13. Aspects of the current curriculum 14. High pupil-teacher ratios 15. Students moving up in grades because of age and not because they are academically ready or because of their abilities. This and other aspects of the Education Act needs to be revisited 16. Long and drawn-out lesson plans that do not cater to the different abilities and needs of all students. *"Teachers should facilitate the learning needs of a child rather than reinforcing a lesson plan."* 17. Not involving teachers in a meaningful way in the development of education

Policy or practice that needs to be abandoned	Policy or practice that needs to be changed/amended
students' vision, enabling them to have a voice in what they learn."	policy. *"Teachers and educators should be the first to be consulted in reshaping educational policies and transforming the system."*
6. Chalk Boards/Chalk and talk	18. Overhaul of the current early childhood curriculum – it needs to infuse technology
7. The segregation of teachers, ECC, primary, secondary etc – *"We are all teachers with the same aim – education and learning."*	19. Dress and grooming policy
8. Single-sex schools	20. The limited number and lack of specialist teachers for music, drama, visual arts, sports, and dance
9. Holding teaches totally responsible for learning outcomes	
10. The streaming of students especially with respect to the Primary Exit Profile (PEP) Exam and place students close to their homes, regardless of their scores.	
11. Teacher promotion due primarily to length of service and age	
12. School rating – traditional vs non-traditional high schools	

20 Innovative Transformations and Desired Features of Education

Teachers shared and highlighted the following innovative transformations as desired features of education[5]:

1. ICT and technology integration in education
2. Critical thinking
3. Online school pilot programmes
4. STEAM curriculum
5. Parental involvement and collaboration/ parenting workshops and seminars
6. Lifelong learning
7. Aligning teaching and learning to the needs of the 21st century
8. Blended learning
9. Free internet access
10. Special education classrooms in every school
11. Holistic learning, developing the whole child
12. Inclusive education system that is equitable
13. Supportive school systems
14. Incorporating more fun-based activities in learning and teaching children how to play (introducing and re-introducing them to games that do not necessarily incorporate technology)
15. Greater involvement of alumni (both locally and from the Diaspora in schools)
16. More school counsellors
17. Increase in psychological assessments and regular assessments of students
18. Improved governance, accountability, monitoring and evaluation of schools and the wider education system
19. Resourced classrooms and computer labs
20. Increased use of motivational speaks to encourage students to want to be educated and place higher values on education

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[5] This is not listed in any particular order or prioritized.

Section 5:
Reimagining the Future of Education in Jamaica: The Consensus of Teachers in Jamaica on the Priorities Initiatives of the TES Action Tracks

During the teacher consultations, teachers were provided with information on the TES via videos and PowerPoint presentations. There were also presentations on the Proposed Strategies and Transformative Initiatives for Consideration in Jamaica under the five Thematic Action Tracks of the TES. Participants were asked to brainstorm using Polling through Mentimeter to assess how they view each of the proposed initiatives presented under four of the five thematic tracks. Using Polling, each participant reviewed the proposed initiatives and voted for their top 3 under four of the five tracks that they believe are most critical for Jamaica to implement as a means of transforming the country's education system, and which must be prioritized now. Focus was not placed on Track 5, financing for education, since the Public Expenditure Review on Education, completed in 2021, focused extensively on financing education. The decision was therefore taken to spend more time discussing the four other thematic tracks.

The results of this Polling Exercise under the four thematic tracks were consistent with the recommendations of the previous exercise under the Situational Analysis as well as the Online Survey. Some of the initiatives that teachers prioritized under the thematic tracks included:

- Recognize teachers and educators as key partners in the education system and ensure their continuous professional development and support
- Engage youth, parents, and communities as critical, continuous partners in the education system at all levels.
- Foster school and learning environments that are physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially safe, inclusive, and conducive for learning.
- Provide financial incentives and support for the development of comprehensive policies for teachers and teaching personnel.
- Promote equality and equity within the education workforce, coupled with career development and mobility opportunities.
- Ensure connectivity and digital learning opportunities for all by building out and maintaining robust, free, public digital learning content and platforms and offering ongoing professional development in ICT.
- Investing in pre-primary education as the foundation for learning and development.

The full results of the polling exercise are presented below.

Action Track 1: Inclusive equitable, safe, and healthy schools

Top three priorities under Action Track 1 that Jamaican teachers believe need to be prioritized now:

1. Recognize teachers and educators as key partners – and ensure their continuous professional development and support
2. Engage youth, parents, and communities as genuine partners to the realization of inclusive, equitable, safe, and healthy learning environments, not just as an optional add-on
3. Foster school and learning environments that are physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially safe, inclusive, and conducive for learning

While "Investing in pre-primary education as the foundation for learning, development and empowerment" scored 4th in the prioritization exercise, many teachers at the ECC, primary and secondary levels indicated that this initiative should be viewed as a priority in Jamaica as part of the new education landscape.

Action Track 2: Learning and skills for life, work and sustainable development

Top three priorities under Action Track 2 that Jamaican teachers believe need to be prioritized now:

1. Promoting a whole-institution approach to learning
2. Strengthening governance and financing
3. Building and implementing robust lifelong learning policies and systems

## Action Track 3: Teachers, teaching, and the teaching profession

Top three priorities under Action Track 3 that Jamaican teachers believe need to be prioritized now:

1. Financial incentives and support for the development of comprehensive policies for teachers and teaching personnel.
2. Design of certification mechanisms and continuous upgrading programmes for in-service teaching personnel, coupled with career and mobility opportunities.
3. Promoting equality and equity within the education workforce.

Action Track 4: Digital learning and transformation

Top three priorities under Action Track 4 that Jamaican teachers believe need to be prioritized now:
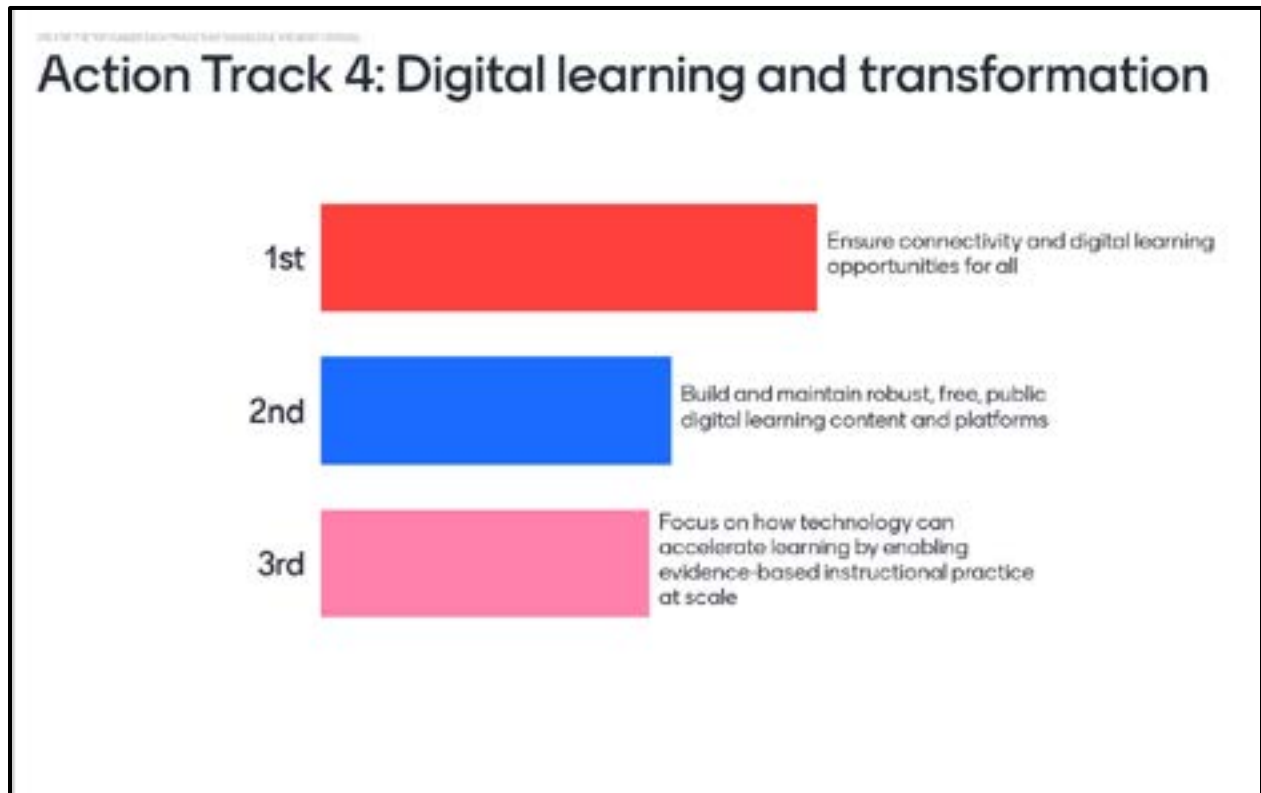
1. Ensure connectivity and digital learning opportunities for all
2. Build and maintain robust, free, public digital learning content and platforms
3. Focus on how technology can accelerate learning by enabling evidence-based instructional practice at scale

Appendix 1 – Dates of Teacher Consultations and Number of Participants

The dates of the teacher consultations are presented in the table below.

Date of Meeting	Time	Number of Participants	Zoom Link
Wednesday 20th July, 2022	1:30 pm to 3:30 pm	210	https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYtc-6urj8jH9H86c7cOEpCNFhQCMcZ-Nj9
Thursday 21st July, 2022	10:00 am to 12:00 noon	230	https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZIof-mgqT8pEtNQVLdOj8dn1f278k7pAxRu
Thursday 21st July, 2022	4:00 pm to 6:00 pm	186	https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwsfuqhrTwoE9KOVmiC2GiYw730rO4qcLEX
Tuesday 26th July, 2022	5:00 pm to 7:00 pm	26	https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEkcuiorT0pEtPX571BZL5kz5oNjwkR7B8k
Thursday 28th July, 2022	2:00 pm to 4:00 pm	180	https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMrd-itqTopGtAWporJZp46ES3DWfx-M_MT
Wednesday 3rd August, 2022	2:00 pm to 4:pm	98	https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZElc-CsrTMiGtcTLB3BRcZuzHBS5i4dnsy6
Total Number of Participants:		**930**	

**Stakeholder Consultations with Teachers
to
Support the Development of Jamaica's Report to the Global Transforming
Education Summit**

Dates: July 26, 27 and 28, 2022

(5:00 pm – 7:00 pm/9 am – 11:00 am/2:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Programme for Focus Group Discussions

Session 1: Welcome and Introductions (10 minutes)
- Jamaica Teaching Council/Early Childhood Commission
- UN Country Team – UN Resident Coordinator's Office/UNICEF Jamaica/UNESCO

Session 2: Completion of Quantitative Survey (7 minutes)

Session 3: Background and Presentation on the Transforming Education Summit (7 minutes)

- Videos on the TES - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GOZBsTXT2Ik
  https://www.instagram.com/p/CfmQA-tjfFW/
- General Information about the TES
- Consultations in the development of Jamaica's Report to the Global Transforming Education Summit
- Other recent assessments supporting Jamaica's report
- Description of the 5 Thematic Action Tracks of the Transforming Education Summit
  1. Inclusive equitable, safe and healthy schools
  2. Learning and skills for life, work and sustainable development
  3. Digital learning and transformation
  4. Teachers, teaching and the teaching profession
  5. Financing of education

This session will explore the current state of Jamaica's education system and will be based entirely on teachers sharing with us, their in-depth knowledge of the sector, their experiences, views and perceptions. Using Mentimeter, this session will be structured around the following 7 topics:

- Topic #1: General State of Jamaica's Education Sector
- Topic #2: The School Environment
- Topic #3: Inclusiveness and Equity
- Topic #4: The Role and Importance of Teachers/Issues and Challenges
- Topic #5: The Profile of Jamaica's Teachers
- Topic #6: ICT and Digital Transformation
- Topic #7: COVID-19

To use Mentimeter, participants will be asked to go menti.com either from their computers, iPad or smart phones – put in code and then respond based on the instructions. The results will be shared on screen as participants input their responses. All responses are anonymous.

Instructions:
Can you tell me how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements using a scale from 1 to 5 ((with 1: strongly agree; 2: agree, 3: neutral, 4: disagree, 5: strongly disagree)?

Discussion following each Mentimeter session will be based on the following guiding questions:

Guiding Questions for Stakeholders following Each Menti Session:
- What are some factors driving your responses?
- Can you provide some examples?
- Can you elaborate on the results in this Menti session?
- Can you identify any possible interventions to address issues and challenges identified?
- Can you identify any existing opportunities in the education system to address the issues and challenges?

Topic #1: General State of Jamaica's Education Sector (go to menti.com and use the code: 3392 0895)
6. Education in Jamaica is at a crossroads
7. Not enough progress is being made across all levels starting from early childhood education
8. Jamaica's achievement-based education system is outdated
9. Vision 2030 Jamaica – National Development Plan and other related national education policies and strategies will enable the achievement of SDG 4 (Quality Education and Training) in Jamaica
10. Educational transformation is an important type of education reform

Topic #2: The School Environment
11. School environments in Jamaica are physically safe
12. School environments in Jamaica are mentally safe
13. School environments in Jamaica are socially safe
14. School environments in Jamaica are conducive for learning

Topic #3: Inclusiveness and Equity
15. Jamaica's education system is equitable
16. Jamaica's education system is gender-transformative (using education systems to achieve gender equality)
17. Jamaica's education system is inclusive and caters to all types of learners
18. Currently, learning and teaching resource materials exist in accessible format for children with visual, audio, and other print disabilities
19. Teachers are trained on using teaching resource materials designed for persons with disabilities and can support a diverse range of learners

Topic #4: The Role and Importance of Teachers/Issues and Challenges
20. In Jamaica, teachers, trainers, and other education personnel are the single most influential variable in the education system for achieving learning outcomes
21. The achievement of SDG 4 – Quality Education and the transformation of education will depend heavily on teachers and education personnel
22. In Jamaica, working conditions, including remuneration is deterring young persons from entering the profession and in-service teachers from remaining in it
23. Teachers in Jamaica now participate in educational decision making- from the classroom to national policy levels
24. Jamaica is confronted with teacher shortages in some subject areas

Topic #5: The Profile of Jamaica's Teachers
25. Jamaican teachers are empowered
26. Jamaican teachers are well-trained and professionally qualified
27. Jamaican teachers are motivated
28. Jamaican teachers are supported within well-resourced systems
29. Jamaican teachers are supported within efficient, and effective systems

Topic #6: ICT and Digital Transformation
30. The digital transformation and the use of technologies hold promise for expanding education access and enriching learning outcomes for more learners
31. ICT and digital spaces foster new and effective pedagogies that expand student knowledge
32. ICT and digital spaces assist lesson delivery

Topic #7: COVID-19

33. The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in significant learning loss in Jamaica
34. The COVID-19 pandemic has had significant mental health and wellness impacts on students
35. Jamaica was off-track with regard to "ensuing inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all", before the pandemic

Closing Questions related to this session:

Session 5: Reimagining the Future of Education in Jamaica – Consensus of Teachers in Jamaica; Key Approaches for Transforming the Education Sector in Jamaica (20 minutes)

This session will begin with a short presentation from the Facilitator on Proposed Strategies and Transformative Initiatives for Consideration in Jamaica under 4 of the 5 Thematic Action Tracks of the Transforming Education Summit.

Brainstorming Exercise
Participants will be asked to brainstorm using Polling through Mentimeter to assess how they view each of the proposed initiatives presented under each of the 5 thematic tracks. Using Polling, each participant will review the proposed initiatives and vote for the top 3 under each track that they believe are most critical for Jamaica to transform its education system. **Go to menti.com and use the code:**

Action Track 1: Inclusive equitable, safe and healthy schools - While *much progress has been made globally in recent decades in education, high rates of poverty, exclusion, insecurity and gender inequality continue to hold millions back from learning. COVID-19, violence, armed conflict, forced displacement, climate-induced disasters, and a growing backlash against gender equality and women's rights continue to forestall and at times regress the gains made, and are widening inequalities in many contexts. Increasing numbers of learners are vulnerable to poverty, malnutrition, infectious diseases, early and unintended pregnancy and poor psychosocial and mental health. Marginalized groups are suffering most.*
Bold action is needed if the international community is to meet its commitments and make education inclusive of all.

Possible Initiatives:
- Build and sustain a culture of quality data production, dissemination, and use
- Develop and implement policies and legislation that protect rights, promote inclusion, prevent and address all forms of stigma, discrimination and exclusion
- Prioritize and place equity, inclusion and gender equality at the heart of education sector plans and budgets
- Recognize teachers and educators as key partners – and ensure their continuous professional development and support

- Invest in pre-primary education as the foundation for learning, development and empowerment
- Design and implement targeted actions to attract out-of-school children and youth, to access or return to school where they can be welcomed and supported to learn
- Counter harmful gender norms, attitudes and practices through gender-transformative education
- Foster school and learning environments that are physically, mentally and socially safe and conducive for learning
- Establish intersectoral partnerships to ensure the health and well-being of learners
- Engage youth, parents and communities as genuine partners to the realization of inclusive, equitable, safe and healthy learning environments, not just as an optional add-on

Action Track 2: Learning and skills for life, work and sustainable development - *Transforming education means empowering learners with the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes to be resilient, adaptable, and prepared for an uncertain and complex future while actively and creatively contributing to human and planetary well-being and sustainable societies.*
Possible Initiatives:
- Empowering learners for human and planetary sustainability by mainstreaming ESD
- Building and implementing robust lifelong learning policies and systems
- Promoting a whole-institution approach to learning
- Addressing evolving skills demand in changing economies and transition to green and digital economies
- Ensuring inclusion, equity and justice
- Strengthening governance and financing

Action Track 3: Teachers, teaching and the teaching profession - *Teachers, trainers and other education personnel are generally considered the single most influential variable in an education system for achieving learning outcomes.1 The achievement of SDG 4 and the transformation of education will depend heavily on teachers and education personnel2that are empowered, adequately recruited, well-trained, professionally qualified, motivated and supported within well-resourced, efficient and effectively governed systems.3 The challenge of Action Track 3 of the Transforming Education Summit is to seek commitments and action to create such an education workforce in a manner that is sustainable and achievable.*
Possible Initiatives:
- Financial incentives and support for the development of comprehensive policies for teachers and teaching personnel.
- Development of standards and competency frameworks and for teachers and support staff
- Integrating ICT into teacher education and practice.
- Design of certification mechanisms and continuous upgrading programme of in-service teaching personnel, coupled with career and mobility opportunities.

- Improving the qualifications of teaching personnel in fragile contexts and in addressing vulnerable groups
- Promoting equality and equity within the education workforce
- Promoting robust social dialogue in education and the participation of teachers in educational decision making, from the classroom to the policy level.

Action Track 4: Digital learning and transformation - Coordinated action is needed to ensure all people have the skills, knowledge, and tools they need to thrive as citizens who will ultimately lead the transformation of societies towards greater sustainability, improved equality, and more abundant peace and cooperation. Technology alone cannot achieve these goals, but it can be a catalytic component of education reforms that will prepare young people, as well as adults, to lead needed transformations. Technology can – and must – help advance our aspirations for inclusive education based on principles of social and economic justice, equity, and respect for human rights.

Possible Initiatives:
- Build and maintain robust, free, public digital learning content and platforms
- Focus on how technology can accelerate learning by enabling evidence-based instructional practice at scale
- Ensure connectivity and digital learning opportunities for all

Additional comments and discussion on the results of the polling exercises, including the following questions (using word clouds etc in Menti)
- What possibilities for system change are apparent now that were not before?
- What features of education are most important to continue, strengthen or safeguard?
- What in the current education policy and practice needs to be abandoned?
- What innovative transformations can be envisioned as desired features of education?
- What are the key levers of change within the national context?

Closing and Next Steps – 5 minutes
- Progress on Jamaica's Report to the Global Transforming Education Summit

Transforming Education Summit 2022

Quantitative Assessment for Teachers

Link to Quantitative Survey (JTC):

https://www.emailmeform.com/builder/form/f239418a4eSnco3t

Background and Objectives of the Consultations

The Ministry of Education and Youth is currently in the process of preparing its national report to be presented during the Transforming Education Summit (TES) to be held in September 2022. The Transforming Education Summit will be convened under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary-General during the 77th UN General Assembly. The Summit will seek to mobilize political ambition, action, solutions, and solidarity to take stock of efforts in place to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic-related learning losses; to revitalize national and global efforts to achieve SDG 4 Quality Education (*Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all);* and to transform education and reimagine education systems for the world of today and tomorrow.

The Government of Jamaica, in collaboration with development partners has, over the last two years, undertaken several studies to assess the current state of the education sector. Chief among these interventions have been the Jamaica Education Transformation Commission Report, the Public Expenditure Review on Education 2021, the Medium-Term Socio-Economic Policy Framework 2021 – 2024 under Vision 2030 Jamaica, and the Voluntary National Review of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) among others. These assessments have been underpinned by extensive stakeholder consultations that have included the administration of the Ministry, students, other related stakeholders and to a lesser extent teachers.

The main objective of these consultations are therefore to allow teachers to share their vision and perspectives to help provide strategic direction on the new, pandemic impacted education landscape and way forward to 2030.

Thank you in advance for being willing to participate in this national activity to ensure that teachers' voices are heard.

Quantitative Survey

Select the level teacher that you are:
Early Childhood
Primary
Secondary
Practice Teacher
Special Ed School
Community College
Tertiary

Select the location of your school
Urban area
Other town/Other urban centre
Rural area

Select the type of school
Public
Private

Size of School
Small – Less than 100
Medium
Large

Instructions

Can you tell me how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements using a scale from 1 to 5 (with 1: strongly agree; 2: agree, 3: neutral, 4: disagree, 5: strongly disagree)?

Questions:

1. I care about my students, and they know it
2. I feel supported in my classroom and at my school
3. My school offers academic and extra curricula activities led by teachers
4. My school cultivates strong parental involvement
5. My school is supportive of its students
6. My school is resilient will be able to withstand natural hazards such as hurricanes and earthquakes
7. I make time to connect with my students and build relationships
8. I feel students at my school will be well prepared to enter the world of work later in life

9. My school values critical and creative thinking
10. At my school resources are fairly evenly distributed
11. I use a variety of teaching methods that work for individuals and groups and incorporate different learning styles
12. I use a variety of assessment methods, balancing individual, and group activities to foster student-to-student engagement
13. I incorporate teacher-student collaboration for better learning experiences
14. I am comfortable teaching in a blended learning environment
15. I include real life examples in my teaching where possible
16. My school teaches at least one core skill to our students
17. My school promotes climate change and environmental awareness
18. My school is a child rights-based school and is child friendly
19. My school promotes awareness and understanding of the causes of gender-based violence
20. My school does not support gender-based violence in any form
21. My school strongly discourages acts of bullying of any kind
22. My school promotes wellness – mental, physical and spiritual
23. My school practices and promotes a set of mutually agreed core values
24. The students, teachers and parents are reminded of these values in different ways at least once a year
25. I feel hopeful about my students' futures
26. I am hopeful of my future in teaching
27. I am generally satisfied with my job
28. I feel my student's socioemotional development is as important as their academic development
29. Despite the issues confronting education and the socioeconomic issues and challenges facing Jamaica which impact our education system, I am passionate about teaching
30. The impact of COVID-19 on educational outcomes at my school was significant
31. I am comfortable with using ICT in teaching and learning
32. I am highly proficient with using ICT in teaching and learning
33. I need to enhance my digital capability and skills
34. I am satisfied with the continued professional development opportunities I am afforded
35. I am currently engaged in a community of practice among teachers and other educators through peer-learning spaces where we exchange and share ideas, innovations and experimentations, and our professional needs

Thank you for the time you have taken to complete this short survey. We look forward to engaging with you in the focus group discussions to be held via Zoom: