

**The petition signed by parents reads:**

**West Pembroke School Petition Calling for Equity in Schools and Staff Resourcing - November 20, 2018**

The 2022 Plan and Mission statement states, *“To provide all students with equitable access to holistic, varied, and high quality instruction that is culturally relevant and empowers students to reach their full potential.* This statement is the foundation for ensuring that every student is the number one priority of our Bermuda Public School System. Our priority at West Pembroke School is teaching and learning.

**Learning Support Teacher**

As of September 2018, WPS has been informed that a lower school learning support teacher will **not** be provided. As the ministry has implemented the Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS) the second and third tier requires the support of a learning support teacher. West Pembroke School has followed the MTSS process with fidelity and transparency. As of late, thirty-nine students have been identified as requiring direct services in the form of academic or behavioral intervention. It should be noted that West Pembroke School has always functioned with two learning support teachers. Currently the following central schools have:

- Northlands – 2 learning support teachers (170 students)
- Victor Scott- 2 learning support teachers (147 students)
- Prospect- 1 learning support (96 students)
- Purvis- 2 learning support teachers (158 students)

This is unacceptable as WPS has **217** students. Of these, thirty-nine students in classes P2 to P6 were identified, by our staff as needing “additional academic interventions.” This list of students was hand delivered to two ministry individuals on October 19, 2018, at the Church Street office.

The ministry has been contacted on the following dates regarding the request of a learning support teacher:

- September 25, 2018
- October 3, 2018
- October 19, 2018 a formal meeting was held at the Ministry of Education advocating for a learning support teacher
- November 9, 2018
- November 14, 2018

To date, WPS is still without a learning support teacher.

### **Autism Spectrum Disorder Program**

The WPS Autism Spectrum Disorder classroom had been promised an additional para-educator to assist with the demands of the eight clientele. WPS has the most students (in comparison with other ASD schools) in the ASD with the least amount of staff support. All other schools have three para-educators with one teacher. West Pembroke School has one teacher with two para-educators. Furthermore, the ASD staff have made multiple attempts to request assistance with transporting students from WPS to the Windreach facility. The staff have had to use their own vehicles and funds to provide transportation. Currently, teachers are experiencing tremendous fatigue, sickness, loss of preps and frustration as their request for assistance has not been met. A promise date had been given (return from the mid-term break) of October 29, 2018, however no para-educator has been provided. The ministry has been contacted on the following dates in regards to the needs of the ASD classroom:

- October 11, 2018
- October 30, 2018
- October 31, 2018
- November 5, 2018
- November 14, 2018

On Monday, November 19, 2018 a new promise date of December 1, 2018 has been set to receive a para-educator.

As a school of 217 students it is essential to have the support services in place for **all**. In order for West Pembroke School to support the diverse learner profiles, a lower school learning support teacher and para-educator are required to meet the needs in an equitable manner.


### **Behavior Concerns**

Of the thirty-nine students eight have been identified as requiring the support of an educational therapist. The therapist assists the classroom teacher with behavior strategies and supports the student with regulating their behaviors. The ministry has not responded to the application for assistance with students on tier 3. Classroom teachers and staff have implemented suggested strategies, however, the student(s) continue to disrupt the learning environment.

### **Standards-Based Grading**

Teachers have been directed by the Ministry of Education to implement Standards-Based Grading for the 2018-2019 school year. Due to the remedial training provided by the ministry, teachers are feeling ill equipped to carry out the request. As a result, the WPS staff have sought out their own professional



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development (paid for by the WPS PTA) and have attended outside webinars to broaden their understanding of SBG.

### **Grades / Inputting**

It is the expectation of the Ministry of Education to input grades on a bi-weekly basis. The teachers wish to meet this expectation, however, due to the poor quality of bandwidth (10megs for the entire school) it is impossible to meet the request as the internet freezes constantly throughout the day. Teachers have resorted to inputting grades on weekends when the internet is faster.