



The Young Entrepreneurs Association of Jamaica

Proposed Policy Position:

TO COMPREHENSIVELY INCLUDE ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN JAMAICA'S FORMAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM

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A core objective of the Young Entrepreneurs Association (YEA) is:

- To affect public policy in order to improve Jamaica's business environment.

The YEA has taken the conscious decision, that in order to achieve this objective, a significant amount of focus has been placed on policy development and advocacy, and this will continue to be the case for the foreseeable future.

In Jamaica's quest to improve its business environment, we have identified the development of an entrepreneurship culture as one of the primary ways through which this objective can be achieved.

The Development of an Entrepreneurship Culture in Jamaica:

From the YEA's perspective, the development of Jamaica's entrepreneurship culture must include but not limited to:

- The inclusion of entrepreneurship in the school curriculum at all levels beginning at the primary school level.
- An increased emphasis on Research and Development, so as to ensure that Jamaican businesses are at the forefront of creating and developing new products and services, creating new industries and sectors, which will aid in Jamaica constantly increasing its productive capacity.
- Significantly strengthening the business support framework; so as to offer greater levels of support services for businesses, with the goal of significantly reducing the failure rate of new businesses, while assisting in the continued growth and development of existing businesses.
- The creation of Business Enterprise Zones or Entrepreneurship Hubs based on a business incubator/accelerator model; which will not only provide industrial and commercial space necessary for the businesses' operations, but will also provide them with the necessary

essential business support service to ensure their successful start-up and continued growth and development.

The Inclusion of Entrepreneurship in the School Curriculum

The YEA is of the firm opinion that the most critical component in the development of Jamaica's entrepreneurship culture is to develop a citizenry which is innovative, well educated, and entrepreneurial. **It is for this reason that the YEA is proposing that entrepreneurship be comprehensively included in Jamaica's formal education curriculum at all grade levels beginning at the primary level, to also include vocational and remedial education and training.**

The YEA is of the view that in order for Jamaica to meet many of the challenges she now faces, she has to develop a culture of innovative, well-educated, and entrepreneurial citizens, who whatever their walk of life, will engender a spirit and inquisitiveness to think in new ways, and be courageous enough to meet and adopt to the various challenges they face.

If Jamaica is to develop the dynamic economy which we all desire, an economy which is able to use innovation and ingenuity to create the jobs that are needed, we are going to require a greater number of young people who are not only willing, but able to become entrepreneurs. To draw from a document published by the European Commission's Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency *"Because education is key to shaping young people's attitudes, skills, and culture, it is vital that entrepreneurship education is addressed from an early age. Entrepreneurship education is essential not only to shape the mindsets of young people but also to provide the skills and knowledge that are central to developing an entrepreneurial culture"*¹

In formulating this policy position, the YEA embarked on a process of consultation both among our membership, and with external partners and stakeholders. We identified some critical questions which needed to be answered in order for us to put forward a coherent, feasible, and practical proposal for the inclusion of entrepreneurship in Jamaica's education curriculum.

Critical Questions

1. What are the benefits to be accrued to Jamaica from the introduction of Entrepreneurship into the school curriculum?
2. At what level should entrepreneurship be introduced?
 - a. Primary level
 - b. Secondary level
- 2.1 What are the justifications for A and/or B above?

¹ *Entrepreneurship Education at School in Europe, National Strategies, Curricula and Learning Outcomes – Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, 2012.*

3. What are the recommended timeframes for implementation?
4. What should be the mode of administrating the Entrepreneurship curriculum? Should it contain both a theoretical and a practical component, similar to that which obtains in Information Technology?
 - a. What mode should the School Based Assessment (SBA) take? Should it be practical? Or should it be a combination of Theory and Practical?
5. Should Entrepreneurship be treated as a Core subject in high schools? – Core subjects are those which all students have to pursue, regardless of their area of specialization eg. Mathematics and English Language.
6. Should Entrepreneurship be introduced as part of the HEART Trust/NTA training program? – Please note the HEART Trust/NTA currently has an Entrepreneurship training course where entrepreneurship is treated as a Skill area. – While this is commendable, should entrepreneurship be included as a component of the training for all other skills areas?
7. What are some recommended approaches to administering Entrepreneurship at the Tertiary level?
8. Success stories – Do we know of other countries where Entrepreneurship is a part of the school curriculum? If yes, who are these countries? What have been the results and successes?

The answers provided to these questions have formed the basis of the YEA’s proposal. However, the consultation process highlighted the fact that there are varying schools of thought on the various questions which needs serious consideration. As such in addition to the proposals put forward, we are recommending that the Ministry of Education, through the Curriculum Development Unit, undertake broad based consultations towards the development of a national strategy for the inclusion of Entrepreneurship in Jamaica’s education curriculum.

Foreseeable Benefits for Jamaica

- The Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise (MSME) sector accounts for over 60% of Jamaica’s employment, and over 65% of Jamaica’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Entrepreneurship education will result in a significant increase in the number of successful entrepreneurs and enterprises, resulting in increased contribution to the country’s employment rate and GDP.
- According to Logic Models and Outcomes for Youth Entrepreneurship Program 2001, a report published by the DC Children and Youth Investment, youth entrepreneurship education has several positive outcomes:
 - *“Improved academic performance, school attendance, and education attainment.*

- *Increased problem solving and decision making abilities.*
- *Improved interpersonal relationships, teamwork, money management, and public speaking skills.*²
- The National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE) further found that when youth participated in entrepreneurship programs, the results were:
 - *“Interest in attending school increased by 32%.*
 - *Occupational aspirations increased by 44%.*
 - *Independent reading increased by 4%.*
 - *Leadership behaviour increased by 8.5%.*
 - *The belief that the attainment of one’s goals in within one’s reach also increased.*”³

Grade Level Introduction

Another critical question to be answered is at what grade level should entrepreneurship be introduced, and how should it be administered at the various levels. The YEA is proposing that entrepreneurship be introduced into the school curriculum starting at the primary school level. We are proposing that a tiered system be used and that various combinations of administrative techniques be applied at the various levels.

Primary Level – At the primary school level we are recommending that the cross-curricular approach be used to administer entrepreneurship education. In this approach, rather than explicitly introducing a subject area called Entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship objectives form part of the values and competences to be developed throughout all subjects and curriculum activities.

Secondary Level – We are recommending that for the purposes of administering entrepreneurship education at the secondary level, a two tiered mechanism be used. The lower secondary tier (1st-3rd Form), and the upper secondary tier (4th-5th). The YEA is proposing that at the lower secondary level, a general curriculum for a subject called “Entrepreneurship” be developed and is made a compulsory subject across all public secondary schools at this level. This will allow for all our students to be exposed to the basic fundamentals and skills of entrepreneurship in much the same way they are exposed to a very wide cross section of traditional subject areas. At the upper secondary level, we are recommending that the subject “Entrepreneurship” be offered as an elective at all public secondary schools across Jamaica, with the option of sitting exams at CSEC. In addition, we are further recommending that the cross-curricular approach be used to integrate some of the fundamental aspects of entrepreneurship into other subject areas so as to allow for further expose for students who may elect not to pursue entrepreneurship at the upper secondary level. At the upper secondary level, we further propose that the School Based Assessment (SBA) for entrepreneurship at CSEC be very practical in its administration. We are recommending that this be used as an opportunity for students to develop actual businesses; developing and offering various products and services which they will actually sell to target markets. The theoretical component of the SBA should include the development of

² *Logic Models and Outcomes for Youth Entrepreneurship Program, The DC Children and Youth Investment, 2001.*

³ *The National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE)*

actual business plans, marketing strategies, financial statements and financial projections, etc. All practical skills which will be needed in the running of successful businesses.

Vocational Education

The YEA has long recognized the importance of including Entrepreneurship education and training as part of our vocational training curriculum at the secondary and tertiary levels. We believe that this is an effective mechanism for inculcating our youth with the spirit of entrepreneurship. The inclusion of entrepreneurship in the vocational curriculum will ensure that participants not only obtain a skill but will be equipped with the knowledge and expertise necessary to utilize their vocational skills to create revenue generating opportunities. The YEA would like to commend the HEART Trust/NTA for developing and offering an Entrepreneurship skills program up to level III. The YEA would like to recommend further:

- That the curriculum of the HEART Trust/NTA be adjusted to include entrepreneurship as part of the training program for all the various skills areas.

This is to help to ensure that while our young people attain a skill, they will also be taught how to:

- Register their own businesses.
- Maintain basic financial records in support of their business ventures.
- Be able to use new media and other unconventional marketing strategies to attract customers to utilize their services offered.
- Understand the importance of and how to file and pay their tax returns.
- How to develop and maintain the highest standards of service delivery.
- As well as all the other important facets that goes into running a successful business.

The YEA believes that the time is opportune for us as a country to move the discussion on the necessity to obtain a skill to a new level. We believe it is now time that we teach our young people the importance of not only obtaining a skill, but even more importantly, how to utilize that skill to create revenue generating opportunities for themselves and others.

Implementation Plan

The YEA is recommending that the Curriculum Development Unit in the Ministry of Education, the competent authority on curriculum development, be tasked with the responsibility of being the coordinating body for the development of a national strategic plan towards the introduction of entrepreneurship in Jamaica's school curriculum at all grade levels beginning at the primary school level.

We are recommending that extensive consultations be held with other Government ministries, agencies and departments, to include the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ), Statistical Institutes of Jamaica (STATIN), the HEART Trust/NTA, the Jamaica Teachers Association

(JTA), the National Parents' Teachers Association, Entrepreneurship Associations (such as the YEA), Private Sector groupings, as well as civil society groups. This will be to ensure that the entrepreneurship curriculum developed and the manner in which it is administered forms part of Jamaica's broader developmental objectives.

We are aware that a curriculum has been developed for the introduction of Entrepreneurship at the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE) level to be introduced for the 2014/2015 academic year. This would therefore mean that extensive amount of work has already taken place to inform that development. We therefore consider it practical, for the additional consultations to commence, and for a curriculum to be developed for introduction at the secondary school level in academic year 2016/2017, and at the primary level in academic year 2017/2018.

The YEA stands ready to play our role as being participants at the consultative table, and to be part of the implementation process wherever possible. We firmly believe that the introduction of entrepreneurship into the education curriculum will go a far way towards engendering a Jamaican Entrepreneurial Culture, which will aid in transforming Jamaica into the ideal local to live, raise families, and do business.

PRESENTED BY:

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