Remarks:
Launch of newer Version of Mathematics and English for 11+
Aries Technology

Programme Director – Education Sector Enhancement Programme

(Edutech), Mr. Paul Murphy, other Ministry officials, representatives of

Aries Technologies Inc., members of Corporate Barbados, Principal of

Mount Tabor Primary School – Mr. Gibbs, students.

In March 2005, Aries Technologies Inc. initiated a Public/Private Sector

partnership with the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports.

This partnership provided at no cost, the software packages,

Mathematics and English for 11+, to primary schools in Barbados.

In Phase I of this partnership, the software was installed in thirteen (13)

Edutech-ready primary schools.

In Phase II of the partnership, as a result of continued private sector

sponsorship, Aries Technologies Inc. has made the software available to

all primary schools with computer facilities, at no cost to the Ministry.

The company continues to ensure that all schools avail themselves of the offer by contacting the schools and installing the program at no cost.

The software packages allow students to practise sets of questions based on topics covered in the Secondary School Entrance Examination.

Students work a practice set of ten questions on a specific topic in the relevant subject.

The computer corrects the questions and provides an assessment along with some recommendations.

The student can review results along with the worked solutions for every question.

Since the installation, the program has received positive feedback and support from teachers across Barbados. The software is viewed as a valuable tool to support teachers in achieving curriculum objectives. The software allows students to work at their own pace thus allowing

teachers to spend more time providing remedial assistance to the students who need it. The software also provides a measurement of student's performance.

This indigenous software developed by Aries Technologies Inc. fits perfectly into the initiatives of the ESEP where the Ministry encourages the use of locally developed educational software to enhance teaching/learning experiences.

The Ministry continues to advance the four components of ESEP – The physical rehabilitation of our schools for the enhancement of the learning environment, curriculum reform which seeks to meet emerging needs of today's learning environment. Institutional strengthening from which our teachers have already benefitted through the training in technology mastery, networking, computer maintenance and repair, and the Mount St. Vincent Master's Programme in Special Needs Education.

The fourth component, technology, encompasses why we are here today as we seek to provide the technological tools to enhance the teaching and learning in our schools.

To date, the activities related to curricular reform have been fully implemented and to ensure the sustainability of this effort a monitoring and Evaluation Plan for the revised curriculum has been developed.

In addition to the curriculum reform strategies, it is recognized that in order to realize the maximum benefits to teachers and students, on-going training of teachers and education administrators must continue.

Information and Communication Technology plays an integral role throughout the educational process.

It continues to be the view of the Ministry that there are four essential in areas for technology use in education.

1. The acquisition of skills by students and teachers

2. The effective administration of the school

3. Research and development of lessons

4. Presentation of lessons

Information and Communication Technology is intricately integrated across all areas, with linkages seen in the pedagogical methodologies, administrative functions, record keeping, reporting, data collection and analysis.

Another critical area of technology is the collection and analysis of data to inform on the indicators of success within our education system. As of October, 2005 the development of the Programme Monitoring Implementation System (PMIS) commenced. The PMIS captures, inter alia, data relevant to post-secondary enrollment rates, percentage passes in standardized tests, number of schools rehabilitated and teacher competence in technology integration. Data for this system will be imported from existing data sets, or other databases such as the Education Monitoring Information System (EMIS).

The EMIS, piloted in seven secondary schools and recently approved by cabinet for full implementation, will facilitate the logging of student attendance, scores, conduct and other relevant school information using a web browser and Internet connection which are standard within ESEP schools. The EMIS allows the Ministry to report on attendance, end of term scores, and a range of other educational indicators by school, class, or individual. Parents will also have the ability through a secure login, to view the progress of their children. Data can be easily transferred between the two systems.

The Ministry is encouraged by several aspects of ESEP to date and as we move from the implementation to the operationalization phase of ESEP the Ministry is anticipating the successful outcomes of the objectives of the Education Sector Enhancement Programme.

As Aries Technologies Inc. embarks on the launch of the latest version of the software, the Ministry continues to uphold its agreement to this partnership by the continued support of the use of the software

produced by Aries Technologies Inc., by encouraging sponsorship of the

program and by promoting the partnership through the print media

and on television and radio. The Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs

and Sports wishes Aries Technologies well and encourages the schools

to utilize the generosity of this company and corporate Barbados in the

provision of this software.