

2015.09.08

4.7 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture regarding creativity and innovation in education:

Given that the States Assembly unanimously approved 2 amendments to the Strategic Plan 2015, which encouraged creativity and innovation in education, can the Minister explain why the word “creative” only appears twice in the Education Business Plan and only relates to I.C.T. (information and communication technology) and the Youth Service, and advise how he intends to ensure that fostering creative, innovative thinking in young people becomes a priority in line with the agreed plan?

Deputy R.G. Bryans (The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture):

Thank you to the Deputy. Everybody probably will understand that I love the words “creativity” and “innovation” put into any question, I have got to say. We are already encouraging creativity and innovation in our schools. I see evidence of it wherever I go. Earlier this year a 14 year-old student took over his whole school for a day and led the learning. He has just been recently shortlisted for the Pride of Jersey. It is just one example. Of course we want more of this, and that is why we are making so many changes at Education. I have just recently constituted a design team within the department to look at these aspects. The whole ethos is now driven by innovation so that we can raise standards in all areas and give students the strongest possible skills. The Business Plan, an innovation in itself, is just a small part. The entire curriculum has been rewritten and creativity is mentioned all the way through. We are also working on our new education business partnership, a cultural passport and generally redesigning our services to make sure they are customer-focused and dynamic.

4.7.1 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Could the Minister possibly explain in a bit more detail the process that would have taken place following this Assembly’s unanimous vote on the amendment to his section of the Strategic Plan? Exactly what changes were made to the Business Plan and what pages of the Business Plan can they be found, please?

Deputy R.G. Bryans:

Several changes were made to the Business Plan when we first constructed it. The focus, as the Deputy has quite rightly said, when we looked at it and looked at its first skeletal state, it was obvious to myself in particular that the words “creativity” and “innovation” were lacking or even missing at that point in time. This was highlighted to me by the work we have done in the digital sector, in particular working with the pilot teams. When they first started out I was concerned that although they were working on an area that desperately needed some new work - coding in particular - the element of creativity was missing. That was agreed and that is why we moved into a partnership in particular with Digital Jersey. But creativity is very much high on my agenda and it gives me the opportunity to say on a personal note that I will be going around all schools, starting with the secondary schools, giving presentations on both creativity and innovation. If anybody would like to attend, J.C.G. (Jersey College for Girls) is the first one on the 18th September, I am sure you would be more than welcome.

4.7.2 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Does the Minister feel that if more funds were available to his department he would be able to invest in creativity across all subjects in schools in order to give pupils the skills they need to innovate and contribute to a diverse economy in Jersey?

Deputy R.G. Bryans:

Yes, everybody would welcome more funds but I think in the situation we find ourselves in, with funds being depleted, this is a beautiful constraint. In fact, that is where creativity grows when it is forced to consider areas that have never been considered before.

[10:30]

Teachers will not survive if they are not creative and innovative in their teaching. No matter what the situation and no matter what the funding, I am very confident the teachers within our departments, within our society, are doing an excellent job.