

Dear Chair and members of the Committee on Education, Culture and Science,

Today I took note of a plenary meeting for February 17th in which the flow from vmbo to havo as well as the flow from havo to vwo is central. Too many schools would have different policies and there appears to be a need for national coordination. It appears that the law needs to be amended for this purpose and that this amendment is mainly and primarily aimed at connecting the VMBO to the HAVO (and later also at connecting the HAVO to the VWO).

In the context of the "national alignment" in a broad sense, I ask with this letter attention for the Dutch Caribbean, which also includes islands that do not have a vmbo- or havo-education (havo). Recently, a motion has been adopted unanimously in the Lower House of Parliament that pleads for a proper definition of the connection of education to the Gwendoline van Puttenschool on St. Eustatius on the one hand and the higher professional education (hbo) in the European Netherlands on the other hand (and this on the basis of current practice: after all, the Gwendoline van Puttenschool now runs the CXC-CSEC program with an A and B profile of which the first students expect a suitable connection with the higher professional education (hbo) in the European Netherlands in the context of their secondary education next summer).

When submitting the motion, Minister Slob explained that this has the attention and not only concerns the Gwendoline van Puttenschool on St. Eustatius but also the Saba Comprehensive School on Saba. Here he has a point but at the same time he shoots himself in his own foot with this argument. After all, already in 2004 the CXC-CSEC-education appears to be on Saba (maybe even earlier, but from 2004 I have been able to find it on the website of the school itself). Government still has to come up with legislation and regulations in order to fit in CSEC with regard to the connection to higher professional education in the European Netherlands is, in my opinion, rather late. Incidentally, five years after the introduction of CXC-CSEC education on St. Eustatius, I also consider it a richly long period to come up with an embedding of it in the European Dutch "educational landscape". The confidence that the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science is there for "the whole" of the Netherlands will in any case not be increased by pupils, parents and staff of the Gwendoline van Putten School.

To return to the connection and through-flow in the broadest sense of the word. I have already informed you about the CXC-CSEC: it would be nice if in a formal sense (legislation or regulations) it is confirmed that the CXC-CSEC as it is now given shape in an A and B profile on the Gwendoline van Puttenschool on St. Eustatius in the context of the through-flow possibilities is put on an equal footing with the havo. In a broad sense, we are not there yet. After all, also St. Maarten has the CXC education with next to the CSEC level also the next higher CAPE level. Where CSEC means "approximately havo", CAPE would stand for "approximately vwo", but whether this has been laid down so concretely is unknown to me. The question whether CSEC gives access to the hbo has already been asked, but does CSEC also give access to the vwo? And does CAPE also give access

to university education (just as vwo does)? If the question about transfer possibilities in a broad sense is on the agenda, it seems to me that these questions also fit within that framework.

I will conclude with a remark. It is clear to me that Nuffic plays a role in answering these questions. The fact that CXC (with examinations at various levels: CPEA, CCSLC, CVQ, CSEC, CAPE and CXC-AD) is seen as a foreign educational system seems outdated to me by now: after all, the Netherlands too appears to have adopted this system.

Thank you in advance for your attention to the issues raised.

Kind regards,

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