



## *Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports and Culture*

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### **PRESS RELEASE**

#### **Fabricated quotation and fake news**

The Ministry of Education notes the publication of a social media post created by NBZLive containing grossly false and misleading information including a fabricated quotation. The publication attempts to cast a shadow on the government's efforts to respond to the needs of the students by procuring much needed devices in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Funding support for the procurement of the devices is expected to come primarily through the Inter-American Development Bank. This support is made possible by the modification of an existing loan program, the Education Quality Improvement Program II (EQIP II). Given the urgency to assist students to start the new school year, the Government of Belize has identified funds that can be used to commence the procurement of the devices, until the expected funds become available from the IDB later this year.

The procurement process must satisfy both the GOB procurement requirements as set out in the Finance & Audit (Reform) Act as well as the the IDB's rigorous rules and regulations as a first tier of approval. In addition, the contract must be reviewed and approved by the Ministry of Finance and the Contractor General prior to execution. No contract has been issued to date and therefore there is no truth to the claim that BZ\$\$7 million dollars has been paid by the Central Bank.

The Ministry of Education is in full compliance with all relevant procurement regulations to ensure the upcoming investment meets or surpasses the sector needs and that the Government of Belize receives full value for money.

