EDITORIAL

KEEPING OUR SCHOOLS SAFE

Our schools need to be safe, protective and enabling for effective teaching and learning to happen. Any school with case(s) of abuse, violence and intimidation is not safe and cannot be guaranteed for good education.

Promoting a safe and conducive school is a collective effort of teachers, parents and other stakeholders, such as corporate, civil society and faith-based organisations. It has never been the case of any school being told to work singly to keep itself safe, conducive and enabling for teaching and learning. No!

Heads of schools and teachers engage with learners, parents and other stakeholders to construct and to follow laid down rules, regulations and guidelines for keeping schools safe for teaching and learning. Rules, regulations and guidelines are made to support in making our schools free from all forms of corporal punishment, sexual harassment and bullying, including cyber bullying. Some pupils and students stop schooling or consider doing so due to the existence of corporal punishment and other forms of abuse in their schools. They fear or are pained by such forms of treatment and so would choose to drop out of such schools.

The school is a haven for show of love, care and for discipline, which is positive and correctional. The school is a place where children want to be at all times to gain knowledge, skills, good attitudes and competencies.

Teachers are role models to learners, and they are friendly and tolerant to learners at all times. Teaching and learning never is in an indecent, hostile and stressful environment.

As the school is supported to welcome and to positively impact on learners, the lives of learners invariably improve for a better nation for all of us. This is the kind of school which is ideal and which all of us should continue to yearn for and to have in every part of our country. This is the school which Ghana Education Service (GES), Ministry of Education (MoE) and Government have been working to have existed in our country. And so, let’s keep our schools safe!

ANTHONY AMOAH
GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING UNIT
HEADQUARTERS, GES

Wash your hands often. Use hand sanitizer. Wear a mask. Do not touch your face.
The Ghana Education Service has in a press statement dated 2nd June, 2021 with reference number GES/DD-G/2/21/127 announced the release of the teaching staff aptitude test results conducted on the 25th and 26th of February, 2021.

Out of 46,486 candidates who were shortlisted for the test, 29,465 candidates representing 63.3% were promoted to the grades of Deputy Director, Assistant Director I, Assistant Director II and Principal Superintendent.

Among the 3,611 candidates that sat for the grade of Deputy Director, 2,139 candidates representing 59.2% were successful. 5,817 candidates representing 66.5% out of 8,753 candidates that sat for the exam were successful for the Assistant Director I grade. For the Assistant Director II grade 19,801 candidates representing 63.8% out of 31,044 candidates passed the exam whereas 1,708 candidates representing 55.5% of 3,078 candidates passed for the Principal Superintendent grade.

Management will like to take this opportunity to congratulate all successful candidates and wish them all the best in their new grades. Candidates must also ensure that they are productive on their new grades in order to promote quality education in the country.

Meanwhile the results have been posted online and can be accessed on www.gespromotions.gov.gh
The Minister for Education, Dr. Yaw Osei Adutwum, met Management and Staff of GES in a durbar at the forecourt of the GES Headquarters to outline his vision for the sector. In his address, the Minister thanked Management and Staff of GES for the successful implementation of the Free Senior High School (FSHS) policy in the last four years. He extolled the excellent performance of the maiden candidates of the FSHS in the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE), and attributed the glory to the hardworking staff and students of the GES.

Dr. Adutwum said "out of 2.1 million candidates that sat the exams from the five WASSCE countries; Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, The Gambia and Liberia, 465 candidates obtained 8-As in total, out of which 411 of them are students from Ghana, and curiously, products of the FSHS programme!".

Dr Yaw Osei Adutwum, challenged staff of the Service to replicate this wonderful performance in the Senior High Schools at the Basic school level as well. He said "my vision is to create an education system that is second to none in the sub-region".

The Honourable Minister further emphasized that, his primary objective is to create a public basic education system that would outcompete the private basic school system, where parents would scramble for spaces in the public basic school system. "It's doable, but this certainly would need a sense of urgency for change" he added.

He also acknowledged that all the plans he has for the pre-tertiary education sector cannot be achieved without the GES, and tasked everyone to put their shoulders to the wheel in order for all to be part of the success story if it's to be told even in a decade.

Dr. Adutwum asked the Management of GES to create suggestion boxes and place them at vantage points for Officers and staff to drop their ideas on how best to improve the pre-tertiary education system.

In his concluding remark, the Minister asked all the staff to be worthy ambassadors of the pre-tertiary education system and embrace all the reforms that are currently ongoing.
YAA ASANTEWAA GIRLS’ SHS WINS 2021 COWBELL INTER SHS INDEPENDENCE DAY DEBATE COMPETITION

Yaa Asantewaa Girls’ SHS, Tanoso, in the Ashanti Region pipped their female competitors from OLA Girls’ SHS, Kenyasi, in the Ahafo Region, to a well-deserved triumph in the grand finale in the 2021 Cowbell Inter SHS Independence debate hosted by the Presbyterian Boys’ Secondary School (PRESEC), Legon, held on the eve of Independence Day, Friday 5th March, 2021.

The intriguing debate between the two girls’ schools was on the motion: “Universal Testing of COVID 19 is necessary”. The victorious team spoke for the motion as the debaters demonstrated oratory, confidence, on the feet thinking, research and industry to the admiration of the impartial Judges and the audience.

Inter SHS debate is an annual event as part of the national calendar series of activities to mark Ghana’s birth as the first independent country sub of the Sahara. The contest is organized from the district levels through to regions and to national zones of South and North where two schools are selected eventually to partake in the grand final contest.

The Chief Judge, Dr. Evans Aggrey Darko, Chief Director at the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, praised the debaters for exhibiting high level capabilities in engaging in that rigour of debate on that controversial subject matter.

Mr. Anthony Boateng; Esq, the Deputy Director-General for (Management Services), who represented the Director General of the Ghana Education Service, congratulated the debaters for their excellent display. “I am so impressed with the qualities shown. By this performance, you have set the stage for the world to follow you and track your progress in life after these explosive intellectual drills”, the DDG counseled.

The winners received GHC4,000 from the Ghana Education Service, certificates, cowbell sponsored laptops, a trophy and assorted products from cowbell. The second placed team also had GHC 3,200 from the Ghana Education Service, certificates, sponsored products tablets and assorted products from cowbell.

On his part, the Dairy Category Lead for Promasidor, producers of Cowbell Products, Mr. Joseph Ashong, explained that the competition falls in line with the commitment of Cowbell to support the educational development of the Ghanaian child. He assured GES management that Cowbell has come to stay and that they will continue to invest in the project.

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... independence day debate competition

The debaters from Yaa Asantewaa Girls’ SHS were (Southern Zone):
1. Dorcas Abena Anokyewaa
2. Sally Samaah Twumasi
3. Christabel Avorga and
4. Shafika Awusi Mohammed Shariff

Whereas OLA Girls’ SHS were represented by (Northern Zone):
1. Valentina Antwi Yeboah
2. Eunice Atiah Ayinbota
3. Ina Boateng-Agyarko and
4. Evelyn Frimpomaa

ELECTORAL COMMISSION DONATES PPEs TO GES

The Electoral Commission (EC) of Ghana has donated Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) to the Ghana Education Service (GES) at a ceremony in Accra.

The donated PPEs comprises 15,000 pieces of liquid soaps, 15,000 hand sanitizers, 66,000 transparent face (masks) shields and 5,000 Re-usable Face Mask.

All the items are to be distributed to schools and education offices across the country.

Speaking at the presentation ceremony, the Chairperson for EC, Mrs. Jean Adukwei Mensa, said the Commission in its bid to ensure a free, fair and transparent election during the covid-19 season, procured the PPEs to ensure that its staff and electorates were safe to cast their ballot.

She explained that the Commission therefore decided to donate the remaining PPEs to the GES and the Ghana Health Service (GHS) since it would go a long way to support the fight against the pandemic in various health facilities, schools and offices across the country.

Mrs. Mensa commended the GES for permitting some of its staff to augment the EC team to carry out the elections.

Prof. Kwasi Opoku Amankwa, Director General of GES, who received the items thanked the EC for the gesture and pledged to forward them to those who would need it most towards the fight against the pandemic.

Other dignitaries who witnessed the presentation were the two Deputy Chairpersons, Dr. Bossman and Mr. Tetteh, the Director-General for GHS, some staff of GES and GHS, as well as EC.
The GES has trained some of its officers on the new Early Childhood Education (ECE) policy at separate events in different locations across the country.

The training, with funding support from UNICEF Ghana, was organized in Accra, Tamale and Kumasi for the 16 regions thus the northern, middle and southern zones of the country.

It was segmented into the three zones to avoid crowding in respect of the Covid-19 safety protocols.

This newly developed Early Childhood Education policy seeks to address the gaps identified in the Education Sector Plan (ESP) 2018-2023 and meet international standards. The new policy framework is focused on six action areas: Management and Planning, Curriculum, Teachers, Family and Community Engagement, Infrastructure, and Monitoring, and Quality Assurance.

The policy is designed to ensure linkages and facilitate coherence across different sectors in order to address early challenges and support the overall development of children’s school readiness, which in turn improves the wellbeing of children aged 4-5 years.

As part of the implementation strategies, key education officers such as Early Childhood Coordinators, Public Relation Officers, Budget Officers, Planning and Statistics officers received orientation on the newly developed policy framework.

Objectives for the training were to:
- Create and increase awareness on the new ECE policy.
- Ensure that other education officers such as PROs, ECE coordinators, Budget, Planning and Statistics Officers factor policy programmes into the routine activities and annual action plans for successful implementation of the policy.
- Sensitise participants on their roles in the implementation of the new policy framework.
- Generate and share messages to communicate the policy to all and sundry.

In all, 197 participants made up of 91 males and 106 females from the 16 regions attended the orientation programme.
GES HEADQUARTERS' DRIVERS RECEIVE TRAINING

The drivers at the GES headquarters have been trained on defensive and ethical driving among other safety methods of driving in Accra.

This training was organized by the Service, in collaboration with Intercity State Transport Corporation (ISTC), a leading organisation in the training of drivers in the country with the aim of equipping the drivers with Road Safety Management skills.

Participants were taken through both theoretical and practical driving skills including but not limited to defensive driving techniques, safety checks, highway code, protocol driving, code of ethics, causes and prevention of road accidents and types of driving license.

At the Headquarters, drivers are categorized into two: Directors' Drivers, and General Pool Drivers. Drivers were drawn from these categories for the training and in all, 38 drivers benefited for this on-the-job training.

The drivers expressed their appreciation to Management of the Service for offering them the opportunity to upgrade their skills and called for such trainings to be periodical.

VALCO TRUST FUND LAUNCHES GHC 3.5 BILLION FUND TO CONSTRUCT 5,000 SCHOOLS UNDER TREES

The VALCO Trust Fund has launched an ambitious project of eliminating the national canker of basic schools under trees across the country by the construction of 5,403 schools under trees or in dilapidated structures in the next five (5) years with a projected budget of GHC 3.5 billion.

Mr Kelvin Yeboah, the Executive Director of VALCO Trust Fund, in a Press Conference held at the Alisa Hotel, Accra, on Tuesday June 1, 2021, announced that the Trust will on Friday 4 June, cut the sod at Karaga in the Northern Region for the initial construction of eighteen (18) school blocks.

According to Mr. Yeboah, the initial eighteen (18) structures selected across the 16 regions of Ghana will cost GHC 6 million and scheduled to be completed within three (3) months.

The school structures shall cover Kindergartens (KG), Primary blocks and Junior High Schools with facilities such as school head's office, staff
common room, toilet facilities, library, ICT lab, borehole system, and furniture.

‘The Ministry of Energy has promised to provide electricity to all these schools either through the national grid or solar powered system in order to facilitate teaching and learning via ICT enabled platforms’, Mr. Yeboah said.

The Executive Director explained that the project is under the auspices of VALCO Trust Fund in partnership with the Ministries of Energy, Education and the beneficiary agency, the Ghana Education Service (GES).

The Director-General of the Ghana Education Service, Prof. Kwasi Opoku-Amankwa on his part was grateful to the initiator, (VALCO Trust Fund) and the funding entities for this thoughtfulness as basic schools had been bedeviled with challenged classrooms.

He pledged to institute measures towards maintaining these facilities to be able to serve their intended usages fully.

The Chief Director of the Energy Ministry, Mr. Lawrence Apaalse, assured the media that his Ministry is fully committed to this novel project of zeroing schools under trees as its contribution towards ensuring improved learning outcomes as school compounds will be conducive for serious academic activities.

A user-friendly website was also launched at the Press Conference by "Real Estate Times Africa" as the platform to access all these schools and their locations that include digital addresses. www.schoolsundertrees.com

GES MARKS MENSTRUAL HYGIENE DAY

The Ghana Education Service (GES) in collaboration with some State agencies and institutions in the Wash sector marked Menstrual Hygiene Day on the theme ‘More Action and Investment in Menstrual Health and Hygiene Now’ at GNAT Hall in Accra.

The event brought together stakeholders in education including school children, health, water & sanitation, NGOs, diplomats and the media.

The Director-General of GES in his welcome address to mark the day said, “the vision behind observing Menstrual Hygiene Day is to create a world where every girl and woman manages her

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menstruation and all related issues without an iota of shame. Every girl and woman should be able to confidently talk about their menstrual health and hygiene without it becoming a barrier in their lives”.

He further emphasized that, based on the theme, the GES is committed to ensuring that the school environment provides the needed enabling environment to make menstruation an amazing experience for girls. “Together we can make sure all girls and boys are educated about menstruation and are provided with the needed support. To achieve this, everyone has a role to play; parents, teachers, and government at the national and decentralised levels”.

Yes! Together we can create a world where no woman or girl is left behind because of her menstruation.

Solidarity messages were delivered by Dr. Patrick Kuma-Aboagye, Director-General, GHS, Anne-Claire Dufay, Country Representative, UNICEF Ghana, Moon Heon Kong, Country Director, KOICA, and Atta Arhin, Chairman, CONIWAS. Among other institutions and agencies that also presented solidarity messages to mark the MHM Day included Canada, WaterAid Ghana, Global Communities, Catholic Relief Services-Ghana Programme, World Vision Ghana and Right To Paly Ghana.

Gloria Amaglo and Adelaide Ntreh both from the Adabraka Presby Basic School recited poems on menstrual hygiene to educate the girl child.

Her Excellency, Kati Csaba, the Canadian High Commissioner to Ghana handed over reusable sanitary pads to Kayayees (Head Potters) through their leadership and to some special needs children through the Special Education Division (SPED) of the Ghana Education Service.

Menstrual Hygiene Management Ambassadors took the opportunity to interact with the participants and shared their experiences in the line of doing advocacy for good menstrual hygiene management. These ambassadors were Israel Laryea of Multimedia (Joynews), Wendy Laryea of Media General Network (TV3) and Sheikh Shaibu.
The project is due tomorrow. You've had two weeks to complete it, yet you've waited until the last minute again. Now, you're faced with spending the next several hours working late into the night. Whether out of anxiety or lack of time, we've all put off doing something that needed to be done. But in the workplace, procrastination can really get you in trouble. You may never know when your manager or supervisor will drop by your desk to check your progress on a particular project.

**Signs you may be prone to procrastination:**
- You often find yourself putting tasks off.
- You work on more minor tasks to avoid.
- You consistently underestimate the time it will take to complete things, so that you are left scrambling at the last minute.

**To stop procrastinating at work:**
- Create a to-do list and stick to it.
- Complete unpleasant tasks first.
- Decide which project-related tasks you can accomplish in the short term, and set a deadline for them.
- Decide which project-related tasks you can accomplish in the long term, and set a later deadline for them.

**PRODUCTIVITY PITFALL: PROCRASTINATION**

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PERSONAL

Question: Tell us your full name Director.
Answer: My full name is Mrs. Patty Assan.

Question: Please give a little background of yourself growing up?
Answer: I grew up in different parts of Ghana. At one time in the Western Region, at another time in the Eastern and Ashanti Regions. The latter part of my growth into adulthood was in the Central and Greater Accra Regions.

Question: We would like to know your Educational background too.
Answer: I completed my secondary education at the Aggrey Memorial Zion Secondary School. From there, I proceeded to the University of Cape Coast to pursue a degree in Education with a Diploma in Religious Studies. Later on in my career, I furthered my education by pursuing a Master of Educational Administration degree at the University of Cape Coast.

Question: Who is the Director Patty we do not Know; any fun activities you like to do?
Answer: I like to watch sci-fi movies and police detective series.

Question: Did you have any nicknames growing up or even now?
Answer: I continuously asked my students in the Senior High School to tell me the nickname they call me but they said they didn’t have any nickname by which I was called.

Question: Any favorite dishes?
Answer: My favorite food is homemade Apem and Palava Sauce.

Question: What are your likes and dislikes?
Answer: I like being in the company of honest and hardworking colleagues. I dislike gossips.

Question: Whom would you say has been the greatest influence in your life and why?
Answer: In my working life, I would say Mrs. Baaba Quarcoo, the former Director for Education Ga East, has been the greatest influence in my life. This is because of her desire for precision from her subordinates and her sense of accuracy and accountability. She made a conscious effort to nurture me to become a diligent and efficient worker in GES.

Question: What was your career aspiration growing up?
Answer: I wanted to be a Manager in a Financial Institution.
Question: Please take us through your career path of all the positions you have held in GES?
Answer: I started as a Class Teacher and Guidance & Counseling Coordinator at the Presbyterian Boys’ Senior High School. I then proceeded to the Ga East District Education Office as an Assistant Director working with the Administration, Budget & Finance Unit. Later on, I was moved to the Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) Unit. I proceeded to become the Deputy Director in charge of Administration and Finance in the same District Office. Thereafter, I was made the acting Director of Education of the Kpone-Katamanso District for a year. I was then posted as the substantive Director of Education for the Ashaiman Municipal and later on also became the Director of Education for the La Nkwantanang-Madina Municipal. I joined the Ghana Education Service Headquarters as the Divisional Director for the Basic Education Division in 2019. Later, when the Basic Education and Secondary Education Divisions were merged and renamed Schools and Instructions Division, I was appointed its Director in which role I currently serve.

Question: How long have you served GES?
Answer: I have served in the GES for over 30 years.

Question: How has the experience been so far working with GES, any challenges?
Answer: Working with GES has been wonderful and fulfilling. I get a sense of accomplishment when I meet students I taught in prominent positions knowing that I have contributed significantly to the development of the human capital needed to make the world a better place.

Question: What do you think are the best skills you bring to your job?
Answer: My tenacity, diligence and dedication coupled with the support of my hardworking staff helped to improve upon educational outcomes in our public schools.

Question: What would you say are your greatest achievements working with GES?
Answer: With the help of my hardworking staff, I moved the National B.E.C.E. ranking of the Ashaiman Municipal from the 22nd position to the 10th position within the span of 3 years in my capacity as the Municipal Director of Education.

Question: How do you want people to remember you?
Answer: I want to be remembered as the Director of Schools and Instructions Division whose work contributed to the transformation of education delivery in our public schools.

Question: Any favorite song(s) you like to listen to?
Answer: Nara - Tim Godfrey & Travis Greene

Question: Any advice for the younger generation who look up to you?
Answer: My advice to the younger generation looking up to me is to be determined, hardworking and honest in all their endeavors and they shall get to the zenith.
GALLERY

THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF GES CELEBRATES HIS BIRTHDAY WITH STAFF AND PUPILS OF ASHONGMAN PRESBY BASIC SCHOOLS

MINISTER OF EDUCATION MEETS GES STAFF
... education policy launched

developmental growth (physical; cognitive; psychosocial, emotional) of all 4-5-year-olds including the disadvantaged, vulnerable and those with disabilities and special needs.

In his opening remarks, the Chairman of the GES Council, Mr. Michael Nsowah who happened to chair the program expressed his delight to be a part of the program and said that if we are to provide quality education for the Ghanaian child, it begins with the early child.

The UNICEF country representative, Anne Claire Dufay congratulated the MoE and GES for their leadership in formulating a comprehensive policy framework, which includes directives, guidelines and costed monitoring and evaluation plan. She said it responds to the needs of our children and their right to education, protection and participation. She continued to say Ghana is the leader in pre primary school education in sub-Saharan Africa.

Her Excellency, the Second Lady of the Republic of Ghana in her speech said, expanding access to Early Childhood Education accelerates development and ensuring that it is achieved, is a non-negotiable and that she is committed to the education of the young Ghanaian child.

Speaking on behalf of the Hon. Minister for Education, Dr. Yaw Osei Adutwum, the Hon. Deputy Minister of Education, Rev. Ntim Fordjour said that the Minister for Education believes strongly and is committed to the pursuit of the Early Childhood Education. He further said that the policy is essential for the growth of the child as it will position them well for their primary, secondary and tertiary education and enable them to make meaningful contributions toward nation building.

Hon. Rev. Ntim Fordjour, inaugurated a National Steering Committee for Early Childhood Education (NaSCECE) who would be responsible to offer the needed technical support for the effective implementation of the ECE Policy and to strengthen the sub-sector.
EDITORIAL TEAM

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0549922331

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Facebook: 130K followers, 112,286 likes.
Twitter: 6,788 followers.
Instagram: 14,742 followers.
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