



**BRIEF REMARKS**

*by*

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**MINISTER OF EDUCATION**

*on the occasion of the:*

Burnt Rock Primary School's  
Graduation Ceremony

*at*

**Mount Zion Baptist Church**

**Victoria Point**

**Andros, The Bahamas**

**10:00 a.m.**

**June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2010**

***Salutations:***

1. Mr. Picewell Forbes – Member of Parliament
2. Mrs. Helen Simmons-Johnson – District Superintendent
3. Mrs. Brenda Colebrooke – District Administrator
4. Mr. Gilbert Kemp – Senior Administrator
5. Mr. Lynward Saunders – Chief Councillor
6. Mrs. Kenva Wallace – Ag. Principal & Other Administrators
7. Teachers
8. Parents
9. Students

***Good Morning!***

I am delighted to be here on the beautiful island of Andros, to share in this wonderful Graduation Ceremony with the Burnt Rock Primary School family. As the Minister of Education, I always feel such a sense of pride when I attend ceremonies such as this, and am able to see how many of our youngsters have arrived at this point with bright futures ahead of them. Well done boys and girls!

I am told that seventeen (17) of you have worked diligently from grades one through six which has earned you the right to be seated where you are. Today, you mark the completion of a six (6) year journey, and while I applaud all of you for not allowing distractions to interfere with your education, I want to pay special recognition to Tenille Jones who is your *Valedictorian* and recipient of the *Principal's Award*; and Leketra Robinson and Carlos Clarke who are both recognized for being an *Outstanding Prefects*. You are all capable of this level of excellence, and as you begin the next leg of your journey at the secondary level, I encourage you to remain focused. You will propel yourselves toward future success if you: listen to your teachers, study hard, complete your homework, participate in positive extra curricular activities, respect your teachers, parents and

friends, be responsible in your actions, and remember always to pray for guidance.

Your well chosen theme: ***“Through Toil...To the Stars”*** serves as good advice for how you ought to order your lives going forward. Students, you it will take sacrifices along the way if you are to *achieve your dreams through excellence in education*. As you climb higher and higher each rung of the ladder will help you to get closer to the stars, but you must continuously prepare for the next level as you go. It was American football coach, Vince Lombardi who said, ***“The price of success is hard work, dedication to the job at hand, and the determination that whether we win or lose, we have applied the best of ourselves to the task at hand.”*** If the great Bahamian athlete Tonique Williams-Darling did not exercise and train daily, and got discouraged by the loses that she experienced in her life, she would not have gone on to win a gold medal at the Olympic games in Athens, Greece in the 400 meter sprint race. Boys and girls, through *toil*, Tonique was able to reach the *stars*, and you can too.

### **Burnt Rock Primary's History:**

Students, your school has a wonderful history, having been established in 1956, first as an All-Age school, and later in 1983 becoming a primary school. Through the years the school has maintained the high educational standards that have been set in previous years, and with a current student population of one hundred, ten (110), I am sure that even greater accomplishments will be realized. The school's philosophy which seeks to **provide the opportunity for students to explore, discover and experience a variety of activities so that they may discover the joy of achievement, their individuality, and become critical thinkers who demonstrate high moral values** is avidly supported by the excellent administration and teaching staff here at the school.

### **Burn Rock Primary's Accomplishments:**

Your accomplishments at Burnt Rock Primary School have not gone unnoticed. To the younger students in the audience you must protect what this graduating class has built and strive to do just as well or even better. Your accomplishments at Burnt Rock Primary School have been outstanding. I am pleased to note that you have done very

well in the school based Social Science Competition having sixth graders place first (1<sup>st</sup>), second (2<sup>nd</sup>), and third (3<sup>rd</sup>). I am also told that this graduating class have improved in the areas of: Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Religious Studies, and Family Life & Health. Students, I encourage you to take advantage of the many educational programmes being offered to you that are designed to enhance your knowledge and to build character. Always give of your best effort and concentrate on attaining and maintaining grade point averages (GPA's).

### **Moving to Junior High School:**

As you prepare for your move to Junior High School, you will have some challenges, but if you apply yourselves, these are hurdles that you can overcome quite easily. You will meet new teachers and friends, some of whom will have a positive influence on you, while others may not. You will have to complete a higher level of work, and will be expected to remember more and to do more. You will have to take on the responsibility of beginning to think things through for yourselves, and not rely so much on those around you for the answers. You will be expected to show maturity of character and to engage in activities that are beneficial to

your growth and development. Sitting before me are some of the best and brightest minds in The Bahamas, and as future leaders of our country, I expect no less from each of you.

### **The Ministry of Education:**

We, at the Ministry of Education are eager to lend our full support to each of you so that you may reach your fullest potential. This school year we ask that you put your focus on the **3- R's** which are: **Reading, Writing** and **Arithmetic**. We also want you to work on the values of **Respect** and **Responsibility**. We hope to see every student upon graduation reading at his /her grade level or above, and able to perform simple Mathematical functions. Work diligently to earn at five *Bahamas Junior Certificate (BJC)*, and *Bahamas General Certificate of Secondary Education (BGCSE)* exam passes. If you are successful the Ministry of Education will be there to support you in the form of special awards and scholarships whether your interest is purely academic or in the technical and vocational fields. There are several years to go before you get there, but remember that preparation begins now. Remember that the key to success is in making good choices.

### **Thanking Stakeholders:**

Students, if you were to look around, you would see many people who played a role in helping you to succeed. They all worked very hard to help you reach the sixth grade. Before you leave this room today, I want you to thank someone who has made a positive difference in your life. I would like to commend Mrs. Kenva Wallace (Ag. Principal) for her capable leadership, the teachers and the entire Burnt Rock School family for their steadfast dedication. I wish also to thank the many stakeholders who would have contributed to the school's success in a tangible way. I encourage you to continue to support the development and growth of our youth. Parents, we encourage you to remain active in the lives of your children as they embark upon another leg of their educational journey.

To the graduating class of 2010, remember that where you go from here has much to do with your attitude and motivation. The journey will definitely continue, but the quality of that journey will be dependent upon the decisions that you make. Remember that it is *only through toil that you will reach the stars*. Once again, congratulations and best wishes for the future.