



Remarks by

**The Minister of Education
The Honourable T. Desmond Bannister, M.P.**

At the

13th Bahamas National Spelling Bee

At

**Wyndham Nassau Resort & Crystal Palace
Casino**

Sunday, 21st March, 2010

3:00 pm

Salutations:

Mrs. Elma Garraway, Permanent Secretary;

Mr. Lionel K. Sands, Director of Education;

**Mrs. Lenora Archer, Deputy Director of Education-
Curriculum;**

**Mrs. Patricia Collins, Deputy Director of Education,
Management;**

**Mr. Kevin Basden, General Manager, The Bahamas Electricity
Corporation;**

**Mrs. Eula Gaitor, Chairperson of the Bahamas National
Spelling Committee;**

Senior Officials of the Ministry of Education;

Members of the Bahamas National Spelling Committee;

Parents;

Coaches;

Teachers;

Viewers watching courtesy of ZNS TV

**And most importantly, our Spelling Bee Finalists from
throughout the country.**

Denis Waitley, the author of **'Psychology of Winning'** and **'Seeds of Greatness'** stated, **"All of the top achievers I know are life-long learners... looking for new skills, insights, and ideas. If they're not learning, they're not growing... not moving toward excellence"**.

Ladies and gentlemen, I dare to say that all of these 21 contestants have good prospects of becoming life-long learners. Research has shown both locally and internationally that students who participate in this competition achieve even greater success later in their lives. It is therefore reasonable to suggest that it takes a certain caliber of persons to enter in this contest. I congratulate all of our contestants who have made it to the finals. I also congratulate and thank the teachers, coaches and parents who have supported these students in their pursuit of the goal of winning the Bahamas National Spelling Bee.

I also wish to thank Mr. Oswald Brown for his vision in bringing this event to The Bahamas. I also commend my predecessors for embracing Mr. Brown's vision and ensuring that The Bahamas National Spelling Bee is a major event on our schools' calendar.

I thank the Nassau Guardian, the Bahamas Electricity Corporation and the Broadcasting Corporation and Majestic Tours Ltd and other corporate citizens for partnering with the Ministry of Education, to stage this event and ensure that every household in The Bahamas is able to watch the finals of this thrilling but exciting competition.

I believe that it is important to stage events such as this because it brings students together and unites us as a country. It also promotes a cultural exchange among islands from the different islands that comprise our archipelago.

Some of these students may never have the opportunity to engage with their counterparts from the various islands until they are older and perhaps have moved to New Providence to pursue tertiary education or work.

Another, noteworthy thing about events such as this is that each student is supported by many persons – their parents, coaches, their schools and family members. This support enables these contestants to reach for more than just the prize of a trophy or a trip to Washington D.C.; they are empowered at this moment with tremendous self-worth and a desire to live up to the expectations of the people that believe in them.

I implore you to continue to uplift these students long after this event is over, and you will reap even more success.

Ladies and gentlemen, our goal is to strive to produce an international winner through, we can do as we have done it in athletics- just ask Chris Brown, the Bahamas' Gold Medalist in the 400 metres at the IAAF World Indoor Championships held in Doha, Qatar last week. We have to start applying ourselves as athletes and developing a consistent programme of training to win the international level.

Ministry of Education along with our corporate partners will continue to provide the means for our children to succeed wherever they are in our archipelago. If we are to realize an international winner in our lifetime we will need the support of the entire country to accomplish this goal.

Thank you and may all of you emerge from this contest a winner.

