



BRIEF REMARKS

by

**HONOURABLE T. DESMOND BANNISTER, M.P.,
MINISTER OF EDUCATION**

on the occasion of the:

*The Primary Principals' Association (PPA)
Ecumenical Church Service*

at

**Wesley Methodist Church
Baillou Hill Rd. & Chapel Street
Nassau, The Bahamas**

3:00 p.m.

16th May, 2010

Salutations:

Reverend Carla Culmer – *Wesley Methodist Church*

Mrs. Elma Garraway –*Permanent Secretary*

Mr. Lionel Sands- *Director of Education*

Deputy Directors of Education

Mr. Wenly Fowler – *President of the Primary Principals' Association*
and Mrs. Bea Fowler

Other Ministry & Department of Education Officials

Executive Officers & Members of the Primary Principals' Association
(Past & Present)

Principals & Other Administrators

Dedicated Teachers

Honourees

Ladies & Gentlemen

Good Afternoon!

“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.” *(Proverbs 3:5,6)*

I am honoured to worship with our dedicated nation builders and the **Primary Principals’ Association** on the occasion of your **33rd Anniversary**. As we look to God to direct our life paths, we rely heavily on our educators to direct the educational paths of our most precious asset, the youth of our nation. Let me say how grateful we, at the Ministry of Education are for the outstanding service that you have given throughout the years, and even more commendable is the fact that you continue to pursue professional development to ensure that our children receive a quality education that will equip them for life.

I am certain that each of us here today can recall some teacher in our past who made a lasting impression on us, and that we can confidently say is partly responsible for the success we have achieved in our lives to date. Therefore, it is with heartfelt thanks that I applaud all current and past educators who may all feel proud in the fact that they have

helped us become a proud nation and a more educated citizenry who effectively compete in the global marketplace.

Yes educators, you have touched our children in more ways than any of us could have imagined, partly because of your duties which extend beyond teaching. We understand that at times you play the roles of counsellor, referee, parent, friend, and even preacher, as you strive daily to guide them along a more positive path. You have ably assisted the Ministry with its mission of helping our children to ***“receive an education that will equip them with the beliefs, attitudes, knowledge and skills required for work and life in a democratic society, guided by Christian values.”***

We, at the Ministry and Department of Education are working consistently to improve our educational standard, and to raise student achievement levels. As exceptional educators, you would be aware that there is much work to be done in the areas of literacy and numeracy. We are looking for better results in these basic skills, and we are also asking to see a vast improvement in the behavioral values of *respect* and *responsibility* in our students. We seek to go back to the basics to shore up the educational foundation.

For us to realize any success with this initiative, however, we require the full support of all stakeholders. We therefore call on parents, the church, corporate Bahamas, and all educators to partner with us. We all want the same outcome for our children which is to guide their growth and development so that they may realize success and take their rightful places in our country. Let us then, make a promise to actively involve ourselves in the lives of these future leaders.

The twenty-one (21) Honourees (*some of whom are retired*) have inspired many through their work and the exemplary lives that they have led and continue to lead. They have certainly lived up to the selected theme: ***“Service: Fuelled by an Attitude of Excellence.”*** Honourees, this tells us that you would have given one hundred percent, even when it was not easy to do so. You would have networked, shared ideas, questioned, analyzed, volunteered, researched, challenged, sacrificed and shown leadership abilities and a good work ethic during the course of your service. You would have gone the extra mile for the benefit of your students. An anonymous student once said, ***“We think of***

the effective teachers we have had over the years with a sense of recognition, but those who have touched our humanity we remember with a deep sense of gratitude."

I commend the Primary Principals' Association, the Honourees, and all stakeholders who collaborate with the Ministry of Education in transforming education and in building our nation's youth. As we progress, let us renew our commitment to strengthening the role of our educational system and its leaders. Honourees, once again I extend heartfelt congratulations to you, and on behalf of the Ministry of Education, the Government of The Bahamas and the people of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas, I thank all educators everywhere.

May God Continue to Bless You!