



**REMARKS**

**BY**

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

**AT**

**THE FIRST TEACHERS' COMMISSIONING  
CEREMONY FOR TEACHER EDUCATION  
GRADUANDS**

**1:00 PM**

**WEDNESDAY, 26<sup>th</sup> MAY, 2010**

**THE PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE  
COLLEGE OF THE BAHAMAS  
OAKES FIELD**

## **SALUTATIONS:**

**President of The College of The Bahamas, Janyne Hodder;**

**Executive Vice President; Dr. Rhonda Chipman-Johnson;**

**Dr. Brenda Cleare, Acting Dean of the School of Education;**

**Dr. Beulah Gardiner-Farquharson, Ed. D.  
Chair/Associate Professor, School of Education;**

**Teacher Education Graduands;**

**Former Chairs of the School of Education, being honoured today;**

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

**Good afternoon.**

**I am extremely honoured that the leadership of The College of The Bahamas and the School of Education have extended this invitation to me to address this first Commissioning Ceremony for Teacher Education Graduands and to pay tribute to the former leaders of the School of Education for their hard work and contribution to this division during their tenure.**

**This is indeed an historic occasion in the school existence as the leaders of this institution have seen fit to have this special observance to provide you our future teachers with an extra source of motivation which is required for your entry into the teaching profession. I also congratulate all of you as you will soon join hundreds of your fellow graduates of the Class of 2010 in celebrating the special milestone of graduation!**

**Let me inform you Graduands that you have chosen the noblest profession on earth; one which allows you to bring light to those who might otherwise be mired in the darkness of ignorance.**

**There are many persons, who would question your rationale (sanity) in pursuing teaching at this time when there is so much negative publicity surrounding the profession. I must however commend you for remaining strong and resolute in your commitment to teaching. Your service is required; your service is mandatory if we are to continue in our growth and development as a Nation.**

**I urge you to do the best in your chosen profession because The Bahamas is depending on you. Part of your goal should be - to become the standard-bearers of excellence because the reality is that excellent teachers inspire and produce excellent students.**

**I am sure you have been keeping abreast of information on local education friends therefore, you would know that the results of recent literacy and numeracy tests administered by the Ministry of Education involving our primary school students show great deficiencies in our students' mathematical and literacy skills. Your challenge therefore is develop new and innovative strategies that will make it a difference in these areas of our student's education.**

**You have qualified yourselves for the profession; that was the easy part of your mission. The reality is that you will encounter students whose socialization puts them at a disadvantage and who in some cases have never known genuine concern in their lives. They are scared and vulnerable; you might very well be their first encounter with a caring human being. Do not abuse their trust; show them that they can overcome any hurdle to make it to the top.**

**Teaching has its rewards as well as its challenges. You will need frequent periods of renewal as you face challenges that sometimes distract you from the overall mission of imparting knowledge to our students. I would advise you to continue to learn and discover benefits of teaching when you begin doubting your abilities.**

**Use your former teachers and lecturers as a source of motivation; recollect the triumphs of the legends of the profession who are still alive – Mr. Hugh Sands; Dr. Keva Bethel; Dr. Charles W. Saunders; our very own Mrs. Elma Garraway and National Teachers of the Year, Ms. Marcia Musgrove and Mrs. Andrea Simms-Adderley and others who can give inspiration to stay on the course.**

**At your call, reach are some of the honorees present today, who are directly involved in your achievement of becoming a teacher. I wish to publicly commend them on behalf of the Government and The Bahamian people for their loyal service and commitment to the development of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas through education.**

**When I look at the programme and see the names of those past and present being celebrated for their service, I feel honoured to have known them and also feel assured that their tutelage produced excellence. Future teachers, looking ahead and asking yourselves the question: *Will my name be listed among the educators who have raised the bar in education and stood for distinction or will I be the average teacher, fulfilling an average career?***

**Ladies and education, let us all applaud excellence - present and excellence to come as we commission these new teachers who will courageously make their contribution to the profession and in so doing enable out students to transform their lives and actualize their potential.**

**Good afternoon.**