



**Remarks by**  
**The Minister of Education**  
**The Honourable T. Desmond Bannister, M.P.**  
**At**  
**San Salvador High School**  
**Student Recognition Day**  
  
**Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> May, 2010**  
**San Salvador**

**Salutations:**

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

**Mrs. Beverly, Thacker, District Superintendent, Cat Island, San Salvador and Rum Cay District;**

**Mrs. Eloise Whymns, Principal;**

**Other Senior Education Officials;**

**Government Officials;**

**Administrators;**

**Teachers;**

**Students;**

**Parents;**

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

**Good morning.**

**It is indeed a pleasure to be here this morning at the San Salvador High School on this lovely and historic island of San Salvador. I am also delighted because we are celebrating students' achievements and success.**

**Students, you have the distinction of attending a school where not only everyone knows your name but knows each other personally. The fact is, the history of the New World started with Guanahani, and the story of Columbus' Landfall and its renaming it San Salvador is a fact borne in books found in libraries and museums all over the world.**

**Since my appointment as Minister of Education, on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009, I have made it an important part of my duties to visit schools throughout The Bahamas; from Abaco in the north to the Inagua in the south. Just days ago, I was in Cat Island and so it is only fitting that when this opportunity presented itself, I did not hesitate to come.**

**I believe that our primary purpose in education is to ensure that you our students have equal opportunities to learn and to acquire skills that will enable you to perform to the best of your ability. So when you succeed, we all succeed. It is critical that you know that the decisions we are making will benefit you and will provide the essential resources you require to learn.**

**This institution has much to celebrate this year and indeed it is these achievements that have brought the national spotlight on this historic isle.**

**In March 2010, Alexis Knowles tied for second-place in the 13<sup>th</sup> National Bahamas Spelling Bee.**

**Just a few days ago, Michelle Greene and Brethel Lightfoot were on the team from the Cat Island, San Salvador and Rum Cay District that won the National High School Debating Championship for the 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive time.**

**Michelle Greene, who I am told is the Most Outstanding Student for the District, also placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in the recent 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Texaco Road Safety Speech competition. This is quite an achievement as the only person that did better than Michelle hailed from another Family Island and the competition fielded in a total of 29 contestants. Many, particularly those from New Providence and Grand Bahama have numerous opportunities to prepare and participate in speech competitions.**

**You not only demonstrated your competency in the classroom but Nachea Smith and Helena Hepburn, did so in the kitchen during the 18<sup>th</sup> National Young Chefs Competition. Ms. Smith placed second overall with her *"Lip Smacking Dolphin and Veggie Rice Fritta"* and *Mouth Watering Tropical Bahamian Taco*. This is also noteworthy feat because it gives credence to your school's Home Economics programme and your ability to excel many disciplines.**

**Another accomplishment that must be heralded is the fact that about two weeks ago Mrs. Abigail Ralph was the District Finalist for the National Teacher of the Year 2010-2012. She represented herself and her school well during the awards programme held in New Providence.**

**Mrs. Ralph is worthy of praise because she is a committed and outstanding teacher who has and continues to inspire and motivate her students to excel. She is also a coach of the championship debate team and their success can be attributed in part to her sacrifices and that of the other coaches that believed in the success teams from this District to win consecutive competitions.**

**Ladies and gentlemen, I urged you to continue to strive for excellence and to realize that this is no disadvantage when it comes to success. We are all born with God-given talents and it is up to each and every one of us to determine what that is and work to develop it.**

**You have excellent role models in the persons I listed and others who are being recognized here today. You must not allow your geography to be one the obstacles to you not maximizing your potential. The world is filled be heroes and heroines who defied the odds and become successful. I urge you to seek out those trailblazers and see what qualities they possessed and that you have in common with them so that you can begin your journey to success.**

**Ladies and gentlemen, it would be remiss, if I did not recognize the wonderful work that Mrs. Eloise Whymns, your Principal has done at this school over the past three years. Mrs. Whymns commitment to you the students is evident in what we are witnessing today.**

**I wish that all of you would give her a round of applause and acknowledge the work that she does. I know that she is proud of you as a loving parent.**

**To all of our honourees I congratulate you for your outstanding work and achievements. We know that someday, armed with the knowledge and values you have acquired here you will make your contribution to the development of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas.**

**Many of you have started sitting your BJC's and BGCSE's examinations. I trust that you will do your best and remember that the Government will do its part to ensure that you receive the financial assistance that you require for college and university.**

**If you achieve five (5) BGCSE's or more inclusive of English and Mathematics, you will be entitled to free tuition and allowances to attend The College of The Bahamas. There are other national scholarships and grants that you can access whether you are pursuing an academic or technical course of study.**

**I encourage you to be proactive in making inquiries about these scholarships so that you can have an equal opportunity at fulfilling your dreams of tertiary education.**

**Teachers, all of this would not have been possible without your dedication to duty and interest in your students' education. I applaud you for what you do in and out of the classrooms to transform lives, and actualize potential.**

**To members of the San Salvador community – leaders and parents, continue to support this school, and its efforts to develop the minds and abilities of our students.**

**Thank you.**

