



SECRETARY GENERAL'S REPORT TO GENERAL COUNCIL

SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 2015

WBC (BEN) HAWTHORNE CONFERENCE ROOM
97B CHURCH STREET, KINGSTON – 2ND FLOOR

**“Celebrating the Legacy: Activism, Service
and Patriotism”**



1.0 INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the third regular meeting of General Council for the Conference Year. We recognize and appreciate your efforts to ensure that this Association remain vibrant and relevant to the needs of our members and, by extension, the education sector.

As Council members, we are embracing the collective responsibility that we share to defend and advance the welfare of our members. It is anticipated that, through critical analysis, vigorous debate, responsible and respectful dialogue, we will arrive at decisions that will enhance our commitment to unite and serve our members.

It is my hope that we will have a worthwhile meeting.

2.0 SALARIES AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

The Salaries and Conditions of Service Committee members met at the Ministry of Finance with Honourable Horace Dalley and his team to commence formal negotiations on Thursday, March 26, 2015. All thirty (30) items on our claim were looked at and responses were given to them. We await the Ministry's written response. However, based on what we heard and some of the responses given, it would be correct to say there is more gloom than hope in the offering.

3.0 50% REFUND

We know that of the \$30M granted in February for this item, \$20M was paid out. It is possible that by now, the remaining \$10M would have been paid out also. Since we did not meet with the Ministry of Education in March, I am unable to state the current position. What I do know is that the Monitoring Committee has been meeting and recommendations made for our colleagues to benefit. The question is when? We will continue to monitor the area closely.

4.0 VOLUNTARY RELOCATION OF TEACHERS

This is an ongoing activity and will be for some time because of the situation of overstaffing and closure of schools that obtains in the system. We continue to advise members not to settle for relocation unless their Association is a part of the process.

5.0 CLOSURE OF SCHOOLS

The Ministry of Education has informed us that there will be the need to close some underpopulated schools but they have not yet given us a list. In principle, we do not have any objection if after all the factors are considered, this is the only option. However, we have made it clear that the jobs and benefits of our teachers must be kept intact. We advise that

members keep the Association updated as the situation unfolds, especially if you are impacted.

6.0 PENSION REFORM

A document pertaining to the new Pension Plan as of April 1, 2016 is in circulation. I have reproduced and circulated the section that speaks to retirement dates.

7.0 THE JAMAICA TEACHING COUNCIL BILL (JTC)

The Association has received the most recent draft of this Bill. An internal committee looked at the Bill and decided that we needed a legal opinion on it. We have engaged a legal firm and we have had discussions with them. We await the formal response. We will keep our members informed as well as provide critical feedback to the Ministry of Education.

8.0 REVISION OF THE EDUCATION ACT 1965 AND REGULATIONS 1980

We do not have any response from the Ministry on this one as yet.

9.0 JTA ROLL OF HONOUR AWARD PRESENTATION CEREMONY

On Thursday, February 12, 2015 we had a splendid ceremony at the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel to honour Mrs. Linda Loza, retired Vice Principal of Calabar Primary and Junior High School. The Guest Speaker was Mrs. Audrey Hinchcliffe, Chairman, Jamaica Foundation for Lifelong Learning.

The function was well supported. Congratulations to our colleague Linda Loza and commendations to Mrs. Judith Spencer-Jarrett and her team for a well-executed function.

10.0 JTA's ANTI-HUMAN/CHILD TRAFFICKING STAKEHOLDERS' CONSULTATION

On Thursday, March 12, 2015 a very successful and insightful forum was held. The team of presenters were very good. They included Ms. Carol Palmer, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Justice; Mr. Greig Smith, Children's Registrar, Office of the Children's Registry; Dr. Kanchana Bandara, Medical Doctor; Senior Superintendent Steve McGreggor, Kingston Western Police Division and Mr., Sydney Henriques, Retired School Safety and Security Director, Ministry of Education. There was also an excellent skit done by teachers of Calabar Primary and Junior High School, led by Miss Avenia Powell.

The attendance was good. Students from some schools were in attendance.

Many thanks to Mrs. Charmaine Gooden Monteith, members of the Primary and Secondary Committees and all those who contributed to the success of the activity.

11.0 PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' FORUM

On Thursday, March 19, 2015 the Professional Services Unit of the Association staged a very meaningful pre-service session. We saw 93 students from ten (10) colleges namely Bethlehem Moravian College, College of Agriculture, Science and Education, Church Teachers' College, The Mico University College, GC Foster College of Physical Education, Shortwood Teachers' College, Sam Sharpe Teachers' College, St. Joseph's Teachers' College and VTDI. Past Presidents Patrick Smith and Dr. Dorothy Raymond were among the speakers. The Secretary General was the keynote speaker.

From all indication, it was a useful and successful activity. Thanks to Mrs. Gooden Monteith and members of the Professional Advancement Committee (PAC) for this timely intervention.

12.0 PRE-RETIREMENT SEMINARS

The series Pre-retirement Seminars began in Portland and Kingston on Wednesday, March 25, 2015. There is one planned for all parishes. (See copy of schedule). We implore you to inform members of this activity because it can prove very beneficial, especially to those who are retiring. This activity is spearheaded by the Professional Services Unit with the full support of our Regional Officers.

13.0 INVESTMENT SEMINARS

This activity has become an annual one under the responsibility of the Business Services Unit. The attached information will be useful as we encourage you to give your full support to this activity.

INSERT SCHEDULE

We record our thanks to Mrs. Ferguson and the Investment Committee for their work in this area.

14.0 RESOLUTION WORKSHOP

A Resolution Workshop was held in the Western Region on Saturday, March 15, 2015. It was well supported and appreciated. Thanks to Mr. Benjie, Regional Officer Hall and the team for a good job.

15.0 EDUCATION CONFERENCE

Plans are at an advance stage for this year's staging of our Education Conference. This will be held from April 8 – 10, 2015 at the Hilton Rose Hall Resort under the theme **Reaching Every Learner – Understanding the Brain: New Insights on Learning and Brain Development**. The keynote speaker will be Dr. Donna Wilson from Nova Southeastern University and there are some very informed, qualified and competent presenters. We concede that the cost is a bit challenging but hope you will make the sacrifice to attend.

We acknowledge the hard work of the Planning and Programme Committees in this effort.

16.0 50TH ANNIVERSARY APPRECIATION BANQUET AND BALL

Plans are being made to stage an Appreciate Banquet and Ball as a climaxing activity to our 50th anniversary celebrations. This is to be held at the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel on Thursday, April 25, 2015 beginning at 7:00 p.m. As soon as more details are finalized, you will be informed.

17.0 PRESIDENT-ELECT ELECTION

The following persons were nominated:

- Jimmt Dawes - Corinaldi Avenue Primary School
- Howard Isaacs - The Moneague College
- Claudette James - Denham Town High School
- Ansell Palmer - Lowe River Primary and Junior High School
- Collington Powell - Friendship Primary School
- Georgia Waugh Richards - Harmons Primary School

A briefing session for the nominees was held by the Credentials Committee. The following persons have accepted the nomination to be candidates in this year's election:

- Howard Isaacs
- Claudette James
- Ansell Palmer
- Collington Powell

There is a proposal from the Credentials Committee outlining how the elections should be conducted. It is hoped that this Association will do everything to protect the integrity of the election process and by extension the name of our Association.

18.0 EDUCATION WEEK

Education Week will be celebrated May 3 – 8, 2015. The main activities will be:

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| Sunday, May 3 | - | National Church Service, William Knibb Memorial Baptist Church, Falmouth |
| Monday, May 4 | - | Symposium (The topic and venue will be announced later) |
| Tuesday, May 5 | - | Read Across Jamaica Day |
| Wednesday, May 6 | - | Teachers' Day |
| Thursday, May 7 | - | Helen Stills Professional Development Day |

Please note that the theme for the week will be decided at this meeting.

We also encourage District and Parish Associations and schools to plan activities for Education Week.

19.0 JTA/SAGICOR PRIMARY, ALL AGE AND JUNIOR HIGH ATHLETIC MEET

The annual JTA/Sagicor Primary, All Age and Junior High Athletic Meet is scheduled to be held at the National Stadium on May 15 and 16, 2015.

The National Sports Committee is ensuring that the required preliminaries, i.e. District and Parish Association Meets, are carried out.

Mrs. Ena Barclay has committed herself to provide the required leadership and support to ensure that we have a successful meet.

20.0 OVERSEAS TRIPS

- **Mrs. Judith Spencer-Jarrett, Senior Secretary, Administration and Finance**, attended a session at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, March 9 – 20, 2015. The main focus was on Gender Issues.
- **The President, Mr. Doran Dixon**, attended the following conferences in the USA:
 - NEA/AFT Joint Higher Education Conference, March 13 – 15, 2015
 - Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) Annual Conference and Exhibit Show, March 21- 23 in Houston, Texas.

It is expected that the Association will benefit from these exposures of our leaders.

21.0 FLEXI-WEEK WORKSHOP

Mrs. Claudia Ferguson, Secretary Business Services and Mrs. Petal Williams, Chair, Tertiary Committee participated in a one-day workshop on Flexi-Week on March 18, 2015. This workshop was put on by the Hugh Lawson Shearer Trade Union Education Institute.

22.0

