

SPEECH DELIVERED BY MR. V. A. ANKAMAH LOMOTEY, DEPUTY REGISTRAR (ASA) OF KNUST AS THE GUEST SPEAKER TO ST. LOUIS COLLEGE OF EDUCATION'S MATRICULATION CEREMONY HELD ON SATURDAY, 14TH NOVEMBER, 2009 AT 9.00AM ON THE THEME "DEVELOPING THE APPROPRIATE STUDY TECHNIQUES FOR ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE"

Mr. Chairman

The Principal

Members of the Board of Governors

Members of the Parent Teacher Association

Invited Guests

Students

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen

It gives me great pleasure to have been invited as the *Guest Speaker* to the Matriculation Ceremony of the 2009/2010 Level 100 Diploma in Basic Education Class of this School. In fact, this is the first time I am participating in this event of yours and I am very happy to be part of you. Please allow me to first extend a hand of gratitude to the Principal, Board of Governors, members of the PTA as well as staff and students of this noble Institution for inviting me to this all important and memorable occasion. As a former teacher of this great and prestigious institution, I am really humbled. I would also want to congratulate the teachers and non-teaching staff as well as students of this august School for the enviable milestone you have achieved thus far in the history of the School. In these times that youth misbehaviour is on the ascendancy, it takes the heart and effort of the patient to be able to train these young ones; especially, within our peculiar circumstance of resource constraint. Congratulations to you all for your effort towards the maintenance of high academic and moral standards in the College.

I would also want to congratulate all the 2009/2010 Level 100 Diploma in Basic Education Class of this School for nurturing the desire to add value to yourselves to become more useful citizens of mother Ghana and Africa at large. In my opinion, I think your decision to further your education in this institution is one of the best and strategic one of your life. I am very hopeful that you will make maximum use of this opportunity so that you will after the completion of your programme of study, go and positively affect the Ghanaian economy at our basic education level.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, I opine that illiteracy and to some extent, innumeracy are also largely some forms of insecurity in themselves to the individual. One's inability to read or write or count or communicate is a tremendous deprivation in itself. As the foundation of every building is the most important part of the structure, so is the issue of basic education in one's life. It is a known fact that, it is the knowledge one acquires during one's basic education years that is build upon at one's secondary and tertiary education levels. Therefore, there is every indication that the issue of basic education is very critical in our quest to develop a literate and vibrant society. It may interest you to know that, prioritising basic education does not compete with other sectors, but supports their development.

There is also no gain in establishing state-of-the-art basic schools, putting the best of investments in basic schools and providing them with all the needed textbooks without a corresponding investment in teacher education. As the main deliverer at the basic education level, the teacher should be the point of focus of all policies geared towards an improvement in basic education delivery in the country. Due to the vulnerability of students and their inability to make independent judgments at the basic school level, such people deserve no less than teachers who are well grounded in the theory and research that form the essential foundation for effective reading instruction, instruction that is evidence-based and adaptable to the needs of individual students and the Ghanaian community. These learners deserve teachers who have a command of a variety of teaching methods and approaches that can be applied according to individual needs, learning ability and circumstances. Teachers must, therefore, be treated as true professionals, free to make instructional decisions and to select and apply the most effective teaching strategies and methods for their respective students but with supervision. As professionals, teachers must be willing to accept full responsibility for the progress of their students if they are accorded the respect, authority, and resources or inputs they need to do their job as trainers.

As a teacher myself and an administrator of an academic institution, the theme of your matriculation ceremony today which is "*Developing the Appropriate Study Techniques for Academic and Professional Excellence*" makes very interesting reflection. I am fully aware that, there is no single method or strategy that will promote high levels of academic excellence for all

learners in all circumstances. There must, therefore, be the need for adaptability in a teacher's approach and teaching methodology in order to get the best of all students in the growth of their spiritual, emotional, physical, social, creative and intellectual potentials. This is one of the main reasons why during your training period as teachers in this institution, you will be taught practical approaches to teaching methodology in an attempt to fully equip you to be versatile and adapt to the peculiar circumstances of your respective classroom environment. Every teacher is aware that, there are individual personality differences and potential of students, thereby giving room to the differences in their intelligence quotient (IQ) levels.

From the foregoing, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, there is every indication that, every professional teacher, especially, those at the basic school level should be fully aware of the several teaching and study techniques for academic and professional excellence. As we all know, there is a wide range of techniques that an individual can use to study for academic and professional excellence and many of these techniques are well suited for certain applications and may not necessarily be suitable for other applications or circumstances. In fact, an individual may choose to use a study system, which actually combines a series of studying techniques that work well for the individual together into an effective process that will help the individual study the material that he or she needs to study. In order for an individual to choose the study system or series of study techniques that will be most effective for that particular individual's situation, it is essential for the individual to consider a variety of factors, guided by the professional council of well trained and motivated teacher who is willing to put his professional expertise at the disposal of his students.

My dear matriculants, I have no doubt that, your education here at this prestigious College of Education and one of the best in Ghana will adequately equip you for every teaching and learning bottleneck you may meet in the course of your studies and professional practice after graduation. It is my hope that you will apply the skills you will be taught as suitably as possible to gain the best of our educational system at the basic level when the time comes. Be very innovative and adaptive in the course of your studies here. Times were when students used the Teacher Training Colleges as stepping stones to attaining other forms of tertiary education. During those times,

students at the Training Colleges were very demotivated for one reason or the other but I am happy that all these Colleges have been restructured and upgraded into diploma awarding institutions in order to provide the needed training for our trainers. So as you begin your studies here in this institution, be self motivated and know that, you will occupy one of the strategic positions in our development drive when you graduate a few years latter. Please learn all that needs to be learnt in order to come out as fully baked professional basic school teachers.

On this note, Mr. Chairman, I would like to once again congratulate all matriculants and it is my hope that, now that there exist several opportunities for further education, you will not rest after your graduation here but strive to pursue further education in order to sharpen your skills in order to put you in a better stead for higher assignments in the future. I wish you all God's blessings in your studies and the best of luck in your stay here on this campus.

Thank you.