



THE PRE-TERTIARY EDUCATION TEACHER UNIONS IN GHANA

(GNAT, NAGRAT, CCT-GH)



**DEMANDS TO THE POLITICAL PARTIES
ON EDUCATION DELIVERY IN GHANA
FOR CONSIDERATION AND INCORPORATION
INTO THEIR ELECTION 2024 MANIFESTOS**

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ABSTRACT

The Pre-tertiary Education Teacher Unions in Ghana, namely, the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT), the National Association of Graduate Teachers (NAGRAT) and the Coalition of Concerned Teachers, Ghana (CCT-GH), recognising ourselves as non-partisan, non-sectarian, equal opportunity – Teacher Unions, see education as the bedrock of societal and national development, since it is the vehicle through which societies and nations provide their peoples with knowledge, job skills and cultural values to grow economically and for prosperity.

The general thinking among Ghanaians is that, the type of education relevant and required for the country has so far been, and continues to be elusive, hence parents, civil society, and politicians, among others, continue to raise concerns over the quality of education delivery in contemporary Ghana.

Further, the Teacher Unions and Educational Workers are neither considered nor involved in the formulation of educational policies which, in many instances, result in poor learning outcomes.

The Unions note, with dismay, the greater Ghanaian public perception, that most educational policies are merely intended to win votes and not to improve quality, with the policy formulators failing to interpret such policies coherently, and not allowing them to run their full lengths of implementation, hence not subjected to evaluation of their successes or otherwise as a basis for the formulation of further policies.

In the light of the above circumstances, we, the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT), the National Association of Graduate Teachers (NAGRAT) and the Coalition of Concerned Teachers, Ghana (CCT-GH), as major stakeholders in quality public education delivery in Ghana, put forward this document as our views on quality pre-tertiary education delivery in Ghana to the Political Parties for consideration and incorporation into their manifestos, noting that ***2024 is an election year, and the political Parties would come up with manifestos on all aspects of Ghanaian life, including education.***

The document is to further get the Political Parties to commit themselves to stipulations on education covered in their manifestos, and to be held to account, when they fail to deliver on them.

In preparing the document, the Unions have relied on materials on Education in Ghana, research, reports and views of renowned international institutions and organisations in education, among them:

- 1) **The ILO/UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers (1966).**
- 2) **The UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Higher – Education Personnel (1997) with a User's Guide.**
- 3) **The GNAT Standpoint on Education (2020).**
- 4) **Continental Education Strategy for Africa – 2016 – 2025.**
- 5) **Conference Handbook, 10th Education International Africa Regional Conference, Johannesburg, South Africa, 19 – 24 November, 2023.**
- 6) **The Collective Agreement for Teaching Staff within the Education Service (ES) – August 2023.**

1.0 THE TEACHER UNIONS' VIEW OF QUALITY EDUCATION

The Teacher Unions' view of quality education is that which equips learners with knowledge, skills and values with which to face the future with ease and confidence.

Thus, education should be enquiry-based, and adequately public-funded, to address the needs of the nation. The following should therefore be the priority areas:

1.1 **Curriculum Reform with Relevance and Inclusiveness:** There should be continuous improvement in the Teacher Education curriculum to align with modern trends in education and industry with emphasis on learner centred pedagogy as proposed by the 2019 GES – NaCCA curriculum, with continued in-service training for practising teachers to be abreast of the contemporary delivery strategies and trends.

1.2 **Consequently, the Unions demand:**

1.2.1 the use of the First Language (LI) as the medium of instruction, from KG 1 to Basic 3, as the key driver to effective teaching and learning, and further,



1.2.2. a connect-to-learning Programme to connect both teachers and learners to quality, contemporary learning resources such as the internet which should be made accessible to them;

1.2.3. the use of ICT for teaching and learning, even in the most-remote and resource-poor parts of the country. This therefore requires the procurement of computers and accessories, training of teachers in ICT and deploying them to all schools, to make teaching and learning more effective and stimulating;

- 1.2.4. installation of solar panels in (rural) areas without electricity, to ensure that no child is left behind, in this era of use of technology in teaching and learning;
- 1.2.5. adoption of virtual laboratories, to help improve/enhance STEM education;
- 1.2.6. construction of toilets with such ancillary facilities as changing rooms for female pupils in all basic schools to improve sanitation and hygiene, as well as retain the females to continue with their education;



- 1.2.6. the Ghana Library Authority be strengthened to construct and manage libraries with ancillary ICT facilities in all basic schools, to inculcate the habit of reading and use of ICT in the pupils.



2.0 THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT:

We make the following demands on the backdrop of findings of an Education International Africa Region research on *School Infrastructure, Teaching and Learning Resources* which indicate that many schools in Sub - Saharan Africa, *Ghana inclusive*, are characterised by

- 2.1.
 - 2.1.1 lack of classrooms
 - 2.1.2 dilapidated classrooms
 - 2.1.3 classrooms built with non-sustainable materials
 - 2.1.4 lack of sanitary facilities
 - 2.1.5 large class size (overcrowding)
 - 2.1.6 pit latrines, putting learners' health and safety at risk
- 2.2. Not understanding that the term *infrastructure* covers aspects such as
 - 2.2.1 Playgrounds
 - 2.2.2 Library facilities
 - 2.2.3 Laboratories
 - 2.2.4 Computer centres
 - 2.2.5 Technology
 - 2.2.6 Machinery and tools
 - 2.2.7 Equipment
 - 2.2.8 Hygiene, (leisure and recreational) facilities
- 2.3 Recalling that *Target 4.a* of the *Sustainable Development Goal 4* commits governments, Ghana's included, to
 - 2.3.1 build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive, and
 - 2.3.2 provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environment for all.
- 2.4 Noting the African Union's *Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 2016 – 2025)*'s commitment to
 - 2.4.1 peaceful and secure environments, as well as building, rehabilitating, preserving education infrastructure, and
 - 2.4.2 developing policies that ensure a permanent, healthy and conducive learning environment in all sub-sectors, and for all, so as to expand quality education.

- 2.5 Cognisant of the fact that,
- 2.5.1 adequate school infrastructure enables teachers and education support personnel to carry out their educational duties in an efficient manner, thus helping to increase enrolment, retention and completion rates of students.
- 2.6 Convinced that,
- 2.6.1 availability and adequacy of educational infrastructure, teaching and learning resources are important indicators of ensuring a conducive and favourable teaching and learning environment, as they have considerable impact on learning outcomes.
- 2.7 Cognisant of the *UNESCO Institute of Statistics Report* revealing that,
- 2.7.1 poor infrastructure and low quality of education have been identified as important barriers for schooling and learning, and that,
- 2.7.2 1 in 3 primary schools in Africa, (Ghana inclusive), do not have toilets
- 2.8 Reiterating the need for African governments, (Ghana inclusive), to
- 2.8.1 Meet the internationally agreed education financing benchmarks of, at least, 6% of GDP, or/and, at least, 20% of the national budget, to help achieve all SDG4 targets, as well as,
- 2.8.2 CESA's objective to build, rehabilitate, preserve education infrastructure and develop policies that ensure a permanent, healthy and conducive learning environment in all sub-sectors, and for all, so as to expand access to quality education.

In the light of the above, we demand strongly, that policy programmes and other concrete measures be taken to address the issues raised above.

Further, we **demand** that

- a) relevant textbooks, workbooks, teaching and learning resources be timeously supplied in their right quantities and numbers, to engender smooth and effective teaching and learning in the schools;
- b) the GES Resource Centre concept in every district be revisited, and the Centres adequately equipped, to complement the teaching and learning efforts in the schools;

- c) the capitation grant meant to alleviate parents and guardians of financial burdens to get school-going children in school be paid promptly and within the scheduled timelines to make the budgeting, planning, management and administration of the schools easy and smooth for school Heads;
- d) schools with higher overhead costs receive more funding to compensate for their needs;
- e) financing of the schools be need and resource - based, using both infrastructural needs and enrolment figures as determinants.
- f) the School Feeding Programme be depoliticised, in order to realise its objective of serving all target beneficiaries equally, and extended to cover more schools, as and when imperative.
- g) provision of free sanitary pads for female learners in the basic schools.



3.0. THE FREE SHS/TVET POLICY

Education is a right for all persons. Article 25 (1)(b) of the 1992 Constitution states that education in its different forms, including Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) shall be made generally available and accessible to all, by every appropriate means, and in particular, by the progressive introduction of free education.

Consequently, the introduction of the free SHS/TVET Policy has improved access and participation in SHS/TVET education.

However, we the Teacher Unions, note with concern, that:

- 3.1 budgetary allocation for the free SHS/TVET does not correspond with enrolment figures.
- 3.2 there is a trend which indicates a decline in education financing. Government is said to have expended a total of GH¢5.12 billion for the implementation of the free SHS programme between 2017 and 2021. The amount fell short of the GH¢7.62 billion approved budget the Ministry of Education requested from the Ministry of Finance for the implementation of the programme during the five-year period. (*GraphicOnline.com, 23rd March, 2023*)

We note that, the government is struggling with the recurrent expenditure on SHS/TVET education, evidenced by Senior High School Heads agitating for postponement of the reopening date of schools, due to delays with the disbursement of funds with which to run the schools, as well as feed the learners.

We again observe, that while the free SHS/TVET policy has enhanced access, the human, logistical and infrastructural resources have not been expanded to commensurate with the overwhelming patronage, and resulted in the double track system, meaning, enrolment has outstripped infrastructure.



Consequent to the above, we **demand** that:

- 3.2.1 the free SHS/TVET policy be reviewed, to achieve the anticipated results.
- 3.2.2 the policy be depoliticised and made a national initiative within the parameters of Article 25 (1)(b) of the 1992 Constitution.

The policy be thus supervised by the Education Directorate and not the free SHS Secretariat.

- 3.2.3 the Human, logistical and infrastructural deficits which have arisen out of the policy be addressed. This will help end the tracking system to help achieve the anticipated outcomes.
- 3.2.4 stakeholders, including parents, be allowed to contribute to the effective running of the schools.
- 3.2.5 holding of School Heads accountable for lapses associated with the Policy and subjecting them to public ridicule ceases, forthwith.
- 3.2.6 teachers be adequately compensated, with the increase in enrolment, contact hours, large class sizes and general supervision, in the schools.
- 3.2.7 quality assurance mechanisms be put in place to ensure that the quality of education envisaged under the policy is not compromised.

4.0 THE TEACHER FACTOR

We define a teacher as a person who has undergone and successfully completed an approved training for teachers and awarded a degree, diploma or certificate by an Institution or Body recognised by the Ghana Education Service Council, and licensed by the National Teaching Council, hence qualified to teach in a public school in Ghana.

The teacher is therefore required to impart knowledge and ensure the acquisition of requisite skills by learners entrusted to his/her care.

We note sadly however, that over the decades, policies relating to training, management, remuneration and welfare of teachers as enjoined by the GES Conditions of Service, have not been implemented fully and effectively. The inequality in teacher deployment, coupled with the unattractive conditions of service and welfare schemes for teachers have resulted in high attrition.

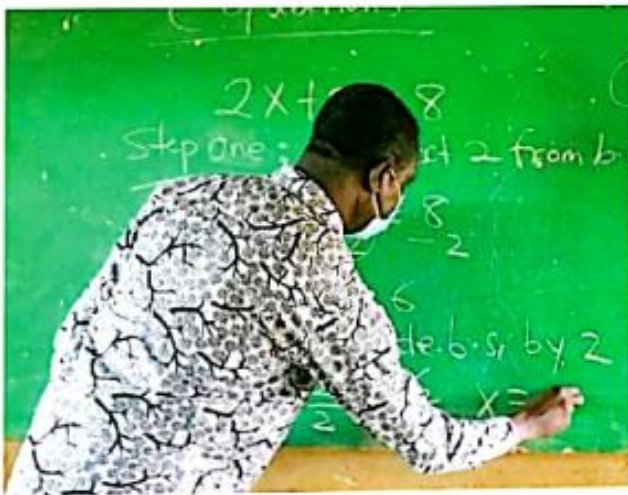
In the light of the above, we **demand** the following:

- 4.1 the Collective Agreements for teachers be fully implemented and Conditions of Service improved to attract and retain them;
- 4.2 a Scheme of Service Manual be provided as a framework to facilitate/guide recruitment, placement, development, career progression and improvement of job performance of teachers;
- 4.3 congenial work environments be provided to enable teachers ply their trade, effectively and efficiently;
- 4.4 teacher motivation be improved, to entice teachers to where they are needed most, and be useful;
- 4.5 allowances for teachers serving in deprived areas be implemented;
- 4.6 allowances be paid to attract and retain teachers in specialised subject areas;
- 4.7 every school to have the needed accommodation attached, for teachers

5.0 TEACHER DEPLOYMENT

We demand the following:

- 5.1 teacher deployment be done to match the needs of schools, and (to) ensure equity in teacher supply across the country;
- 5.2 manpower audit of education offices and schools be conducted periodically, with emphasis on schools in urban areas, to right-size the number of teachers working in the offices, and excess staff deployed to the classrooms;
- 5.3 teachers be distributed equitably to the Urban and Rural areas, to address the Urban – Rural inequality in teacher distribution;
- 5.4 use of transfer (reposting) as a means of coercing school Heads, Union leaders and classroom teachers and employees who engage in genuine professional discourse into quietude and submission ceases, forthwith.



Furthermore, we demand

- 5.4.1 commensurate salary increases for teachers, following the increase in contact and working hours, arising out of the implementation of the free SHS/TVET Policy;
- 5.4.2 regular in-service training and re-training for GES staff, with the GES assuming responsibility for all expenses pertaining to such workshops, as enjoined by Section 15(3ii) of the Collective Agreement;
- 5.4.3 full implementation of the thirty-five (35) pupils-in-a-class-to-a teacher at the basic level GES policy on Pupil/Teacher Ratio (PRT);
- 5.4.4 appropriate and effective mode of Licensing of teachers be put in place to bring them at par with their counterparts elsewhere;

5.4.5 GES to ensure full implementation of provisions on teacher promotion, as enjoined by the Collective Agreement.

We again demand:

- a) a Health Insurance Scheme for teachers, to address ailments outside the National Health Insurance Scheme;
- b) that every teacher benefits from a scholarship scheme for, at least, two of his/her wards up to the tertiary level;
- c) a Housing Scheme for teachers to address their accommodation needs;
- d) an Auto Loan Policy for teachers, especially those in the rural areas, to enable them acquire vehicles and motor bikes to facilitate their movements, and enhance their social status;
- e) the provision of life jackets for teachers on the island communities, to ensure their safety on the waters;
- f) prompt payment of salaries and accumulated arrears of newly-posted teachers;
- g) waiver of the 3% Controller and Accountant General's Department charge on all transactions with the Teacher Unions;
- h) waiver of duties on vehicles imported by teachers with engine capacity not exceeding 2.0;
- i) attachment of duty post accommodation for teachers to classroom blocks constructed in the rural areas;
- j) honouring and executing all other provisions and stipulations of the Collective Agreement as negotiated between the Teacher Unions and the Fair Wages and Salaries Commission *not covered in this document*, to the mutual benefit of both parties, and the good of mother Ghana.

ISSUED BY THE PRE-TERTIARY EDUCATION TEACHER UNIONS
IN GHANA

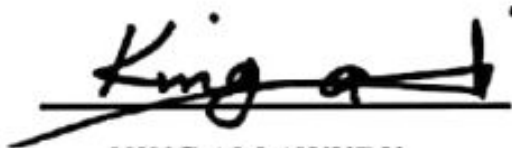
SIGNED:



THOMAS TANKO MUSAH
GENERAL SECRETARY – GNAT



ERIC A. CARBONU
PRESIDENT – NAGRAT



KING ALI AWUDU
PRESIDENT – CCT-GH

DATED: 26TH FEBRUARY, 2024



JANUARY 2024