

**COMMUNIQUE ISSUED BY THE CONFERENCE OF HEADS OF ASSISTED  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS (CHASS), AT THE END OF ITS 62<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL NATIONAL  
CONFERENCE HELD AT THE AUDITORIUM OF THE UNIVERSITY FOR  
DEVELOPMENT STUDIES, TAMALE, NORTHERN REGION**

**A. PREAMBLE**

We, members of the Conference of Heads of Assisted Secondary Schools (CHASS), having met in Tamale in the Northern Region from the 7<sup>th</sup> of October, 2024 to 11<sup>th</sup> October, 2024 for our 62<sup>nd</sup> Annual National Conference and having deliberated on the theme: *“Making the Senior High School Community a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Centre – A Shared Responsibility”*, and having considered and discussed some crucial issues within the country’s educational sector, especially issues pertaining to the Senior High School sector, and focusing on the fact that, the future of this country is in our hands, taking cognizance of our collective commitment to improving the quality of education in Senior High Schools across the country and also noting with concern the fact that, the illicit mining activity popularly referred to as ‘galamsey’ is gradually biting deeper and deeper into the very survival and future of our country, hereby resolve as follows:

**B. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

We appreciate and fully support the Ministry’s relentless efforts in ensuring that Ghana’s educational curricula is favorably positioned to be at par with global standard of training critical minds for the 4th Industrial Revolution and churning out Senior High School graduates adequately equipped with critical minds and other 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills. We, members of CHASS, recognize the huge responsibilities and commitments associated with the Ministry’s unwavering determination in making sure that our schools become 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Centres.

1. We acknowledge the huge budgetary allocation of Government towards the continuous improvement of the Free Senior High School (FSHS) policy in particular and education in general as well as the advanced steps taken so far to roll out the new and comprehensive secondary school curriculum. We equally recognize the Ministry’s focus on enhancing Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), which is crucial for equipping our youth with skills essential for the future of Ghana and the world at large.
2. CHASS acknowledges and affirms the sacrifices made by Heads of Senior High Schools and their staff; both teaching and non-teaching, for their dedicated roles in the course of the year and without whose efforts, help and support, the system could not have run on smoothly.

3. CHASS further acknowledges and appreciates the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service, most especially, the Honorable Minister for Education, his Deputies, the Director General of the Ghana Education Service and his Management staff, for the respect and support they have extended to CHASS leadership, as well as the collaboration and the cooperation that have been fostered between the stated parties.
4. CHASS recognizes the commendable efforts and support of some PAs, past Students, various organizations, individuals and other stakeholders for their enormous support they have been giving to our schools in these trying times of our educational history.

### **C. CONCERNS AND RESOLVES**

The past year had presented us with a lot of challenges, especially in terms of resources to carry out the numerous activities in our schools. We have struggled to secure the necessary funding to take care of perishable needs and other recurrent expenditures in our schools. Monies that were supposed to be allocated to our schools for maintenance and other essential works were not received, leaving us to navigate these challenges with limited resources.

Once again, CHASS notes with grave worry that we do not get our concerns addressed adequately over the years. CHASS is very much convinced that the issues raised in our communiques over the past years, if they were heeded to, would have resolved most of the avoidable problems bedeviling the smooth implementation of the FSHS policy, an otherwise excellent initiative.

CHASS therefore requests and communicates the following:

#### **1. Creating A 21st Century Learning Environment**

Recognizing that creating a 21st century learning environment is a capital-intensive venture, and the fact that it cannot be done by government alone, considering the competing needs on the national budget, CHASS therefore calls on all stakeholders, especially industry, donor agencies and development partners to support government to transform our Senior High schools to become 21st century compliant.

#### **2. Dedicated funding source for the FSHS policy**

There should be an identifiable and dedicated source of funding for the FSHS Policy. This we believe would do away with the nagging challenges confronting the smooth implementation of the policy. CHASS is therefore appealing to government to do broad

stakeholder consultation and come out with a formidable, sustainable and dedicated source of funding solely for the Free SHS.

### **3. Internet Access to All Senior High Schools**

While CHASS commends government's initiative to provide 21st century tools for teaching and learning, internet access to Senior High Schools has unfortunately stalled. For over a year now, many of our schools have been disconnected from the network. We appeal to the Ministry of Education to urgently resolve all the issues inhibiting the provision of internet connectivity to all schools to enhance the 21st Century learning environment for digital learning that Ghana wants to achieve. This is particularly crucial considering the recent decision of government to distribute tablets to all students and the need to achieve the intended purposes.

### **2. Growing Indiscipline in Schools**

CHASS is deeply worried about the growing indiscipline in schools; and the seemingly ambivalent attitude of most stakeholders, especially human/child rights advocates. We call on Parents and Guardians and Relatives of students to equally step their responsibilities towards the upbringing of their children

CHASS is equally worried about the spade and level of malpractice that has characterized the conduct of WASSCE every year. We hereby call on the Ministry of Education, the GES, WAEC, and all relevant stakeholders to urgently take steps to address this canker to secure the integrity of the examining body (WAEC) and the credibility of the WASSCE Certificate. We hereby recommend that, WAEC should adopt the full-scale serialization of questions in subsequent examinations which in CHASS's considered view will hugely mitigate the occurrences of these malpractices that CHASS is worried about.

We have resolved that we shall commit ourselves to leading the crusade against any form of exam malpractices most especially the persistent occurrences of the use of mobile phones in exam rooms. We shall, to the best of our abilities continue to ensure zero tolerance for examination malpractices in any form and as a professional body; CHASS will publicly distance itself from any of its members who fall foul to the law regulating the conduct of the WASSCE. We call on other stakeholders such as parents; Traditional Leaders among others not to do anything that will affect the integrity of the WASSCE. These have dire consequences for the future of our children and the country.

## **5. Deterioration of School Facilities**

Again, CHASS is highly worried watching helplessly for school facilities to deteriorate due to non-repairs and irregular maintenance of school facilities over a long period of time, thereby creating unsafe and uncondusive learning environment for staff and students. CHASS has noted the Ministry's intention to recruit Facility Managers for highly populated schools. It is our considered opinion that the main problem is the non-payment of recurrent fees to schools for such purposes. We therefore appeal to the Ministry that, beyond the recruitment of these Facility Managers to manage school facilities exclusively, immediate steps should also be taken to release the recurrent fees which have been in arrears for over a year now. This demand must be considered seriously because schools have not been able to maintain their facilities especially after the implementation of the FSHS policy. Evidence of conspicuous deterioration of school facilities is very noticeable in many schools across the country, and compounded by the increased numbers in enrollment of students as a result of the FSHS policy. CHASS further recommends to government to develop a comprehensive nationwide school rehabilitation programme to restore the physical integrity and dignity of our school infrastructures and learning environments.

## **6. The Plight of Day Schools**

The plight of Day schools is quite distressing since they rely solely on recurrent fees to run. Any undue delay in the release of funds makes it almost impossible to undertake any activity in the school. CHASS calls on the Ministry of Education to ensure that money meant for recurrent expenditure is always released to Day schools in particular and in schools in general, adequately and timeously to enable them to function effectively, as any delay in their releases not only render schools very incapable of moving on smoothly, but also expose School Heads to the bashing and threats of school creditors.

## **7. Erratic Supply of Non-Perishable Food Items and the Irregular Release of Funds**

The continuous feeding of boarding students on credit is increasingly becoming stressful and unbearable for Heads. The erratic supply of non-perishable food items to distribution centres and the irregular release of funds to schools for perishables have become a nightmare for innocent Heads. Government must therefore make adequate provision for feeding to save Heads the agony of spending all the time chasing food items at the expense of supervision and monitoring of teaching and learning. CHASS therefore request a timely and adequate release of funds for perishables and equally appeal for upward adjustments of same to reflect the conditions in the market. Indeed, it is the considered view of CHASS that a timely, adequate and direct release of

funds to schools to procure their own food items will eliminate the predictable annual cancer of non-availability of some food items that has bedeviled the schools. Also, food items like groundnut, millet and beans, which have not been supplied for some time now, must be addressed to address the lapses in the quality and quantity of food for Ghanaian school children. Incidents of shortages of some food items in some of the regions must also be checked. We further recommend that food and funds must always be released well in advance before the reopening of schools.

#### **8 .Timely releases of motivation allowances.**

Money for teacher motivation must be released on time to achieve the intended purposes and outcomes.

#### **9. Inadequate furniture**

Inadequate furniture in the classrooms, dormitories, dining halls, office, etc. continues to create problems for proper school organization. We call on the Ministry of Education to urgently address this perennial concern to ensure effective teaching and learning. This requirement is not an option if Ghana wants to create 21<sup>st</sup> century learning centres.

#### **10. ECG prepaid meters in schools**

ECG prepaid meters in schools continues to deepen the financial woes of Heads. CHASS is extremely surprise as to why its members should be burdened with the responsibility of pre-financing the supply of electricity power for classrooms, libraries, dormitories, dining halls, laboratories, etc for academic purposes. We demand Government's immediate intervention in this regard. Government should as matter of urgency change all prepaid meters to postpaid in order to guarantee continuous power supply for effective academic work and security at night.

#### **11. Recruitment of critical non-teaching staff**

Recruitment of critical non-teaching staff, especially security personnel, cleaners, labourers, cooks, tradesmen, pantry hands etc should be a matter of priority.CHASS urgently requests the Ministry of

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Education and GES to take immediate steps in this regard. Many schools are seriously grappling with either total lack of, or inadequate numbers of these categories of staff.

## **12. A stable and predictable academic calendar**

A stable and predictable academic calendar should be rolled out to ensure proper planning of school activities. This would minimize the frequent interruption of semesters so as to allow adequate contact hours.

## **13. Frequent interdictions of SHS/SHSTS Heads**

CHASS is seriously unhappy with the frequent interdiction of its members at the least opportunity, even before issues are investigated. We call for a stakeholder engagement to address the ambiguities in the guidelines for the operation of PAs in schools to ensure that Heads are not caught in the trap. CHASS further calls for the immediate development and implementation of a Standard Operation (SOP) Guideline for schools, spelling out procedures in implementing administrative and managerial policies or directives in our schools. This will curb the disparities in the implementation process. This phenomenon of interdictions especially in recent times, is seriously damping the spirits of SHS Heads who are already overburdened with numerous challenges, and also killing their spirits of initiative.

## **14. Illegal Mining (Galamsey) menace**

We, members of CHASS are deeply concerned about the State's inability to address the issues of illegal mining (galamsey) that have bedeviled this country for some time now. We are even more worried when we see the youth, including students, on social media depleting the forest and polluting water bodies with impunity. 'Galamsey' is an existential national security threat and we call on government and all Ghanaians to find a lasting solution to this canker, devoid of partisan interest through the adoption of sincere, pragmatic and concrete strategies in the immediate short, medium and long terms.

## **15. Peaceful General Elections**

CHASS is committed to ensuring that there is peace before, during and after the 2024 general elections. We therefore charge all schools to educate students on the need to avoid violence and not to allow themselves to be used by political parties to cause mayhem. We also call on our members to desist from extreme partisan behaviours that will impugn their professionalism.

## D. CONCLUSION

We, members of CHASS wish to appreciate all stakeholders, especially the MOE and the Ghana Education Service for the opportunity to organize this Conference which has afforded us the chance to deeply deliberate on issues bothering on transforming our schools into 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Centres. We wish to particularly commend all other groups for their immense support to CHASS in organizing this Conference. CHASS is eternally grateful to T-TEL for shouldering the capacity component of the conference and also for their efforts to help the GES/MOE to transform teaching and learning in the country. We want to register our special gratitude to the Yaa Naa, the Yagbon Wura and the Naa Yiri and their Chiefs for the warm reception and their generous contributions towards our Conference.

We re-iterate our commitment to implementing the various initiatives of GES/MOE to improve second cycle education.

SIGNED



MR BARO PRIMUS

NATIONAL SECRETARY

ATTESTED



REV FR STEPHEN OWUSU SEKYERE

PRESIDENT