

SPEECH READ BY:

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE TEACHER
TRAINEES ASSOCIATION OF GHANA**

THEME:

**THE TEACHER EDUCATION POLICY
REFORM; PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES**

DATE:

FRIDAY, 27TH APRIL 2018

VENUE:

GBEWAA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, PUSIGA

**The Paramount Chief of Bawku, and Chairman for the occasion,
Naba Asigri Abugrago Azoka II,**

Upper East Regional Minister,

Hon. Minister of State in charge of Tertiary Education,

President of PRINCOF,

Principals of Colleges of Education,

**Deputy Ranking Member, Parliamentary Select Committee on
Education,**

Executive Secretary, National Teaching Council (NTC),

Former Minister of Education, Dr. Ekow Spio-Gabbrah,

Directors of Education,

Metropolitan, Municipal and District Chief Executives,

Members of Parliament,

TTAG President and Executives,

Student Leaders,

Distinguished invited Guests,

Members of the noble inky fraternity,

All Protocols duly observed (APO),

Ladies and Gentlemen,

**Naba Chair, It is always a very happy moment for me to be with
TTAG. Apart from making me feel younger myself, it allows me to**

share the joy, energy and the spirit that are commonly associated with TTAG Gatherings. "Chooboi"!

I am particularly pleased and honored to be the Guest speaker of the 23rd Annual General Assembly of your noble association on the theme: "Teacher Education Reform, Prospects and challenges". It offers me a chance to share with you how the Government of Ghana through the Policy Reform of Teacher Education is building a solid foundation to transform teaching and learning and improve educational outcomes, and also prepare new generation of teachers with the right skills and competencies for the 21st Century and beyond.

Considered as one of the brightest moments in our country's education history, the current teacher education reform holds the potential to completely change the face of teacher education by;

- ❖ providing you - this new generation of teachers - the right mix of skills and competencies not only to function in Ghana's classrooms, but also to give you – the teachers - a new professional status befitting you as a 21st century education practioners.**
- ❖ making teaching degree profession: application into teacher education will attract wider group of young men and women; high quality applicants - who aspire to undertake training**

programmes in the new curriculum and enter the profession with a Bachelor's degree in Education.

- ❖ improving the quality of teachers by ensuring that they undergo a rigorous and practically focused high-quality Degree programme which enables them to demonstrate the competencies set out in the National Teachers' Standards (NTS).**

- ❖ Alleviating the current disrupted workforce situation where in-service teachers leave the classroom during part of the week for lectures as part of the two years studies to upgrade their Diplomas to Degree, leading to significant loss of instructional time and create artificial teacher shortages at the school level.**

Naba Chair, well qualified and empowered teachers are the key to inspiring and educating learners to fulfil their full potentials. The next generation of Ghana's citizens will be defined by the quality of teachers we produce today.

We are all in agreement that access to education has improved significantly over the past two decades, but the quality of teaching and learning has not kept pace with the increasing number of learners entering the school system. Not only are education outcomes poor, but the gaps are wide and increasing.

Naba Chair, to tackle this, the Government launched the Transforming Teacher Education and Learning (T-TEL) Programme in 2014 with funding from UK aid, to support all public colleges of education to prepare teachers with 21st century competencies and skills who are well-equipped and empowered for a career dedicated to improving the learning outcomes of young Ghanaian and nurturing them into honest, creative and responsible citizens.

T-TEL in collaboration with national education institutions and regulatory agencies such as National Council for Tertiary Education, the National Accreditation Board, Ghana Education Service to name but a few, has been supporting the 46 public colleges of education on their path to becoming tertiary “centres of excellence” and producing quality teachers ready to teach, inspire and educate Ghana’s young people – who are one of the nation’s critical assets for sustainable development - so that they able to lead the country’s progress and prosperity.

Naba Chair, in order to prepare and develop highly qualified and motivated teachers who are able to inspire their pupils to achieve better outcomes in basic education, the Ministry of Education saw the need to overhaul the current teacher training model. This gave birth to the Policy on Teacher Education Reform.

The Policy on Teacher Education Reform in Ghana as approved by Cabinet on 28th September, 2017 represents a fundamental rethinking and radical redesign of Teacher Education in order to

achieve dramatic improvements in the quality of new teachers and in the learning outcomes of the children they teach in the basic education sector. The cabinet memorandum approved the;

- ❖ National Teachers Standards for Pre-service teachers and the;**
- ❖ National Teacher Education Curriculum Framework (NTECF)**

The cabinet memo also stated that the Government would;

- ❖ convert of Colleges of Education into University Colleges of Education of public universities offering education curriculums and;**
- ❖ design a new four-year Bachelor of Education curriculum for initial teacher education to be offered at the University Colleges of Education**

Naba Chair, with your kind permission I would like to provide a general outline of how the Policy on teacher education reform will be implemented as planned by the Ministry of Education:

- ❖ 46 public Colleges of Education will be affiliated to five public Universities to develop the new 4-year Bachelor of Education curriculum based on the National Teacher Education Curriculum Framework and specialisms for accreditation and implementation.**
- ❖ A four-year Bachelor of Education (B. Ed) degree will provide sufficient time, intellectual rigour and exposure to practical teaching to enable teachers to be prepared in line with the**

professional standard which Ghana deserves and requires. This teacher qualification will enable new teachers to demonstrate all the competencies required in a modern-day classroom and be able to inspire children to learn.

- ❖ The current 3-year Diploma in Basic Education does not provide this comprehensive grounding and hence the intention of the Ministry of Education is for the current Diploma in Basic Education programme to be discontinued for all new entrants from October 2018 onwards. This is an essential step in upgrading the status and quality of the teaching profession in Ghana.**
- ❖ Special Affiliation Agreements will be signed between the Colleges of Education and Universities for a maximum transitional period of five (5) years. These agreements will ensure among other things, that Universities offer faculty, assessment and certification as well as staff capacity building services to the Colleges of Education for the delivery of the new bachelor of Education degree programme.**
- ❖ There will be a fifth year dedicated to school placement, induction and research to be managed by the National Teaching Council.**

- ❖ **This one year of school placement, induction and reflective research will be a requirement for admission into the teaching profession – award of “Qualified Teachers Status”**
- ❖ **All Initial Teacher Education Universities will be expected to align their existing Curriculums with the National Teacher Education Curriculum Framework and the National Teachers’ Standards.**

Naba Chair, the new model for training teachers through the Policy on Teacher Education Reform is unique in many ways and has huge prospects for all. It provides the right conditions for an excellent teacher education model for our country and also:

- ❖ **Raises the status of practical teaching experience through supported and assessed teaching in school**
- ❖ **Concentrates on the pedagogic and subject knowledge for teaching the School Curriculum**
- ❖ **Places significant attention on developing literacy and language skills**
- ❖ **Focuses on assessment of trainees against the Teachers’ Standards through professional portfolios including evidence from: in-school learning; assignments and examination results**
- ❖ **Emphasises strong working partnership between the training institutions, the Ministry of Education, Ghana Education Service and schools.**

- ❖ **Moves from generalist to level specific specialism for K-P3, primary, JHS for teachers in the current basic school system**
- ❖ **Emphasizes a more interactive, learner focused approach to training**
- ❖ **Is explicit in addressing critical cross cutting issues: equity and inclusivity, assessment, core skills, professional values, action research and reflection**
- ❖ **Includes high quality CPD for tutors, mentors, lecturers, school and college/ university leaders**

Naba Chair, celebrated education reforms such as occurred in Korea, Poland, Vietnam, Pakistan, Mexico, Papua New Guinea were confronted with various degrees of challenges. What matters most is how the actors in a reform stand prepared to mitigate these challenges.

I am happy to say that the Ministry of Education through the technical support from T-TEL and other collaborating agencies stands ready to mitigate any form of risks associated with the implementation of the reform. Naba Chair,

- ❖ **The timeframe set to start rolling out the policy is October 2018 which may be short yet very achievable. There is a curriculum writing timetable and accompanying curriculum writing guide which sets out the steps required to complete the Curriculum by the end of May 2018. A team of experts from Universities, Colleges of Education and other**

institutions are currently writing the new Curriculum. The entire process will be resource intensive but is achievable because of the readily available technical assistance and resources to enable universities to execute this very important task.

- ❖ A five-year transitional timeline is proposed to fully convert Colleges into University Colleges. Effective the 2018/19 academic year, Colleges of Education will have service-level agreements with their affiliated University - buying examination and accreditation services and sharing faculty. Once the first batch of teachers graduate in 2022, then the Ministry of Education can consider what steps to take next regarding ownership.**

- ❖ To respond to capacity constraints, T-TEL on behalf of the Ministry will be working with Colleges and universities to conduct an urgent review of capacity gaps. This review will then be used to create an action plan highlighting the actions required to close gaps. T-TEL through the Ministry of Education, will then provide technical assistance, resources and training to support CPD activities in Universities and Colleges of Education to ensure their readiness by October 2018.**

- ❖ **All Colleges of Education will need to meet the Quality Assurance and Accreditation standards set out by NAB in their Quality Assurance and Accreditation Assessment Instrument. All colleges will undergo an institutional assessment to be carried out by NAB. The institutional assessment process has started and colleges through the institutional strengthening support they have been receiving from T-TEL are ready for the assessment. The Ministry through T-TEL will continue to provide capacity building support to the Colleges to enable them rise to the challenge brought about through their transition to University Colleges of Education status.**

- ❖ **The Ministry of Education is a firm believer in the concept of lifelong learning and serving teachers who wish to upgrade themselves will continue to have the opportunity to improve themselves, as currently exists in all institutions of higher learning.**

- ❖ **The Ghana Education Service will continue to play a critical role in ensuring that the supply of newly qualified teachers is aligned with actual demand within the country's basic schools. It should be noted that, upon completion of the four-year B. Ed, teacher trainees will be expected to work within the basic school system for a year before being**

eligible to attain their “Qualified Teacher Status” and be licensed by NTC to practice as a Professional Teachers.

- ❖ Going forward the Ministry wishes to increase the specificity of teacher postings so that teacher trainees are assigned to specific schools where their skills and expertise are needed the most.**

- ❖ Above all, new teachers trained under this new model, will not need to undertake the rigorous sandwich and distance education programmes to upgrade their Diploma certificates into degrees. What this does is that you get a degree with an additional one year in College rather than spend two years doing sandwich and distance education programmes, with its associated costs and inconveniences.**

- ❖ Finishing your training as a newly qualified teacher with a degree and a license automatically places the qualified teacher on a certain salary scale well above that of a Diploma.**

- ❖ Again, as a country, we will put a stop to the disruptive nature of the sandwich and distance education programmes for which teachers leave the classroom to participate and rather put the focus on teaching and learning in our basic schools,**

Naba Chair, All protocol duly observed. The quality of our education system and school is only as good as the quality of the teachers and individuals who work in them. The teacher teaches the teacher and the teacher teaches and develop all other professionals. Teachers matter. The time to have qualified and quality teachers is now. The time for change is now. I call on TTAG to consider as part of your discussions what main tasks you need to do within your mandate to ensure the effective implementation of the Teacher Education Reform policy. T-TEL is happy to support you to undertake the activities you identify. It can only be possible working together!

Long live Ghana

Long live TTAG

I wish you fruitful deliberations!