

Administration of Schools in Ghana - Part 2

Dear Friends,

In the October article I mentioned that I would use this November article to talk about some of the significant officers in the education system, the Ghana Teaching Service (GTS). It is still my intention, but I need to digress a little. There are some matters that need to be addressed first, in this narration, because it forms part of the whole, an important part of the Ghanaian education system.

Types of Schools

Before I go any further, I wish to state here, that in the Ghana Education system, we have two main categories of schools: the *Private* and the *Public*.

The *Private School* is founded by individuals, organizations (churches), and companies, and *named* after the individual, the organization or the company. For example; a corporation or an industry, or organization may set up a school for its employees within its premises, for the children and dependents of the employees. An individual, with the requisite resources to operate and sustain the management of a school may also do so. Any such institution has to be duly registered under the laws of Ghana and liable to pay all taxes applicable. Such a school may employ both certified teachers with education as an added qualification, or anybody who is considered capable to teach without a professional teacher's certificate. In the parlance of the teaching service, such an individual is referred to as *pupil teacher*. The management of the school takes care of the remunerations (payment) of the teachers in that institution, and may never be resourced by the government, except under special circumstances. A Private School may be established under any category; Basic, Secondary, and Tertiary. For the tertiary, the government has to grant the exclusive right for the award of degrees, to the institution, otherwise it is affiliated to another university that awards degrees on their behalf.

The *Public School* is established by the government in the appropriate community, and in most cases, named or identified by the location of the school. All of the teachers in the Public School are the employees of the Ghana Education Service on behalf of the government of Ghana. The government takes care of all

the remunerations of all employed in the public institutions. It is the government that plans the academic calendar of the schools in the public system, and regulates the curriculum of the schools. The syllabus for the teaching and learning in the Public School is the prerogative of the government, its design and implementation in the school, with officers assigned responsibilities to ensure that the objectives of the curriculum and the syllabus are achieved. The maintenance of the school and resourcing is the responsibility of the government, indeed all the logistics for the running of the public schools are the sole responsibility of the government. In recent times alumni of the schools try to '*pay back*' their appreciation to express gratitude for benefitting from the school. Parents of current students also play a significant part in the development and progress of their children's school.

The Examination System

All of the schools in the *Public System* subscribe to the same examination system. This system is known as the *West African Examinations Council (WAEC)*. The members of this Council are the former *English colonies of Great Britain*; Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Gambia. The Council administers examinations for ALL the secondary schools, whereas for the basic school, they the *Basic Education Examination Certificate (B.E.C.E)*.

Some Private schools subscribe to the system of examination by the *West African Examination Council*; others to outside bodies, like the British *General Certificate of Examination (G.C.E. 'O' and 'A' Levels)*. The 'O' Level was written after five years of secondary education. A success in the 'O' Level takes one to two years of 'A' Level certificate for admission to the university. In total, a child may spend between nineteen and twenty-one years to finish all of their schooling up to and through university. And then, around age 27 years, to become employed.

In the next article I will endeavor to describe in some detail what roles the officers play.

Pastor Ben Wilson