

Fraternal Greetings to the 43rd Annual General Conference of the Barbados Union of Teachers, 18 April, 2017, Almond Bay Conference Centre, Hastings, Christ Church

Conference Theme: Valuing Teachers, Improving their Status

The Congress of Trade Unions and Staff Associations of Barbados places on record its greetings to the 43rd Annual General Conference of the Barbados Union of Teachers. CTUSAB commends the Barbados Union of Teachers on the role it has and continues to play in the representation of teachers across the education system of Barbados.

Given the fact that the teaching profession has been placed under immense pressure in recent times, the theme for this year's conference of 'Valuing Teachers, Improving their Status,' is both time sensitive and appropriate.

If we accept that the quality of teachers in our schools is paramount to the academic achievements of students, the development of their skills and talents and to their socialization into the society, then there must be a strong appreciation of the value of our teachers.

The recognition of and the contribution of teachers to the development of our society ought not to be taken for granted, and as such, they should be appropriately rewarded and remunerated.

If the value and status of teachers is to be improved, the responsibility lies with the teacher trade unions to work relentlessly to ensure that teachers are respected by the authorities and the public at large.

In accepting the fact that teachers play a defining role in the molding and shaping of the members of the society, then it places a responsibility on the authorities to ensure initiatives are introduced to motivate teachers, which in turn would serve to instill a greater sense of pride amongst them as a body of professionals.

It is for this conference to make a strong statement to the authorities that the value of teachers and the improvement of their status can best be advanced where upon there is a commitment to a large scale investment in the teaching profession, to include improved salaries, conditions of service, and its human resources development. These are positive elements that ought to be addressed, as opposed to a concentration on teacher bashing, vilification and condemnation.

Solidarity Forever. Best wishes for a successful 43rd Annual General Conference.

DENNIS DE PEIZA

General Secretary