

**ADDRESS BY THE PRINCIPAL AT THE 1ST CONGREGATION OF
THE B.ED DEGREE PROGRAMME OF ST. FRANCIS COLLEGE OF
EDUCATION ON FRIDAY 9TH JUNE, 2023 AT THE COLLEGE
AUDITORIUM**

- His Lordship, Most Rev. Bishop Emmanuel Kofi Fianu SVD, Bishop of Ho Diocese.
- Honourable Minister of Education, Dr. Yaw Osei Adutwum
- Honourable Freddie Blay, former NPP National Chairman
- The Minister for Railways Development and MP for Hohoe Constituency, Honourable John Peter Amewu.
- The Hohoe Municipal Chief Executive
- The Director, Ghana Tertiary Education Commission(GTEC)
- The Director of Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast.
- The Registrar, National Teaching Council (NTC)
- Mr. Martin Kwaku Ayisi, CEO Minerals Commission.

- Togbega Gabusu VII (the 7th), Paramount Chief of Gbi Traditional Area.
- Mamaga Agoe Dewotorny I, Queen mother of Gbi Traditional Area.
- Togbewo , Mamawo
- Former Principals of St. Francis College of Education.
- The Princoff
- The Dean & Rep. of Fred Binka Public School of Health.
- The Hohoe Municipal Director of Education - GES
- OFA Representatives
- The Regional Manager, Bank of Ghana.
- The Managers and staff of CBG, ADB, Fidelity Bank, GCB Bank Plc., and Absa Bank.
- The Heads of various Departments and Institutions
- The Hohoe Divisional Police Commander.

- Members of Convocation
- Staff of St. Francis College of Education
- Staff of St. Francis Demonstration Schools
- Land Owners from the Togbe Ayim, Togbe Ahorklui and Togbe Anyigba families.
- The Media here present
- Graduands
- Parents variously here assembled.
- Invited Guests
- Students
- Ladies and Gentlemen

It is with great privilege that I stand before you today as the Principal of St. Francis College of Education in Hohoe, Volta Region of Ghana, to address you on this momentous occasion; the 1st Graduation Ceremony of our Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) Programme that commenced in 2018. Today marks a significant milestone in the lives of our Graduands and serves as a proof of their hard work, perseverance, and unwavering commitment to their educational journey.

As we gather here today, we are reminded of the powerful impact education holds in shaping the future of individuals and the society as a whole. The B.Ed programme at St. Francis College of Education was designed with this vision in mind to produce competent and compassionate educators who will become agents of positive change in the field of education. The programme was rolled out through a Comprehensive Tertiary Education Policy by the Government of Ghana through the Ministry of Education in all the 46 Colleges of Education in the 2018/2019 academic year.

However, these graduating students offered only the B.Ed Junior High School Education programme.

STATISTICS:

Professor Chairman, St. Francis College of Education on this august occasion is proud to present **356** students for graduation. Out of this number, **244** are males representing **68.5%** and **112** are females representing **31.5%**. With joy and a great delight, I announce that these Graduands have all successfully satisfied all the requirements for the awarding of the B.Ed JHS Education degree.

CLASS	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	% OUT OF 356
FIRST CLASS	32	21	11	8.99%
SECOND UPPER	225	149	76	63.2%
SECOND LOWER	87	64	23	24.44%
THIRD CLASS	12	10	2	3.37%

To the graduating class, I offer my heartfelt congratulations for this remarkable achievement. Your dedication to learning, your thirst for knowledge, and your passion for teaching in the communities have brought you to this pivotal moment in your lives. Throughout the past years, you have embraced challenges, overcome obstacles, and emerged as confident and capable educators ready to make a lasting impact on the lives of the students you are going to teach. Your commitment to excellence has not gone unnoticed, and today, we celebrate your remarkable accomplishments.

However, let me acknowledge the significant roles played by all the various stakeholders in achieving this great feat.

Prof. Chairman, permit me to say a big thank you to the Roman Catholic Church, the Governing Council, the Management staff present and past, various Chiefs, Queen mothers and Elders of our community for co-existing peacefully, the

Teaching Staff, Administration, Kitchen staff, Security, Labourers and Cleaners who work tirelessly to guide you on this transformative journey. I also say thank to OFA for their unflinching support.

Prof. Chairman, at this juncture let me appeal to this noble assembly to observe a minute's silence for the four (4) tutors we have lost since the commencement of the programme in 2018. They are Mr. Manfred Mawudoku, Mr. Emmanuel Duke Tamakloe, Mr. Mannesseh Asigbetse, and Mr. Prince Kwamena Odoom all of blessed Memory.

INFRASTRUCTURE

In an effort to improve the college's housing situation, the Government of Ghana has made provision for a three hundred bed (300-bed) hostel facility which is under construction.

Prof. Chairman, it is anticipated that the project will be completed in 15 months. There is also a 4-storey building for staff accomodation currently in progress.

REFURBISHMENT OF COMPUTER LABORATORY

Prof. Chairman, our theme highlights on embracing change and life long learning for teachers through the use of ICT for development. Our college has suffered the problem of a well equipped modern ICT laboratory but by the special Grace of God and with the support of my august management, we have been able to equip the computer laboratory with 50 ultra modern computers, networking equipments and other accessories for teaching and learning.

LIBRARY

We have also succeeded in refurbishing our library with ultra modern furniture for students and staff, research activities with learning comfortability.

TECHNICAL, VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND EDUCATION

The College is implementing Competency-Based Training (CBT) under the Technical Vocational Education and Training Commission (CTVET) as part of its effort to broaden the scope of its training to offer hands on practical for our Trainee Teachers to be able to teach the Basic School practicals. As a result, management has set up a technical committee to oversee the college's accreditation as a service provider and devise procedures for implementing the CBT programme.

WOMEN IN THE STEM MOVEMENT

Education in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) is key to the college's goal. Science and Technology are without question, the driving force of every economy and it is a significant agent of societal growth and development.

Taking into account the technological world in which we find ourselves currently , students and teachers must recognise the significance and the relevance of STEM education, as well as what it should be and equally embrace them.

Although the college has taught STEM teachers over the years, little attention has been paid to STEM education for women. The management of St. Francis College of Education resorted to reform and renew STEM activities, particularly for female college trainees.

In the light of the above however, management and the Gender Unit of this College have started the women in STEM Movement. The objective of the movement is to sensitise and inspire female STEM trainees to become innovative and effective problem solvers, as well as to empower them to be creative and to encourage more girls to enroll in the STEM education. Therefore, St. Francis College of Education is appealing to the Minister of Education to give us one STEM facility on campus here to enable us train our teachers. We have demarcated a land area and we have made it available purposely for such a STEM facility.

COLLEGE SIGNAGE

Prof. Chairman, Management has intensified the branding of the College for more visibility to increase our reach and popularity.

With respect to the above, a signage has been mounted at the entrance of the College with the specified colour schemes of St. Francis College of Education.

COLLEGE LANDS

The College is grateful to all the families that allocated lands to the school. Currently, Togbe Ayim and the Ayim family have donated approximately 4.6 acres of land located along the Lolobi road on the northeastern side to the College. The administration is also in talks with the Ayim family regarding the lease agreement of another 50 acres of land along the Lolobi Road as STEM campus.

PARTNERSHIP AND COOPERATION

We have strengthened our collaborative network, both local and international.

In April last year, three of our students, Josephnie Anyomi, Dodzi Kutordzor and Apreku George embarked on an educational tour to Belgium to meet sixteen other students from different countries for an international study program. As a sequel of that visit, the College hosted Ms. Greet the coordinator of our partner school, Thomas More University in Belgium for discussions on how to strengthen our partnership. In March this year however, two students from Belgium also visited our college to interact with our students. Plans are advanced for staff mobility and more collaborations this year.

NEEDS

1. Prof. Chairman, the College at the moment lacks an operational vehicle for management to make any meaningful travels to discharge its responsibilities.

2. We have an old bus for the STS activities but the cost of servicing it, is very high. Our resources are inadequate to do continuous servicing. We appeal to the Minister of Education to replace it for us please.
3. We have also started to fence the College to ward off encroachers, to protect life and property on the campus. Again we are appealing to all of you to assist us to complete this project to ensure maximum security.
4. In June next year, this College will host the inter Colleges of Education Sports Festival here at Hohoe. But our fields are not good to host our counterparts. For this reason, we would like to appeal to philanthropists, the Member of Parliament for Hohoe, individuals and corporate bodies like the Bank of Ghana, Consolidated Bank of Ghana (CBG), GCB Bank Plc, the Agricultural Development Bank (ADB), the Absa Bank and all other citizens to assist us with an Astro Turf if possible and other facilities for the games in 2024. We shall write you officially for your support.

FINAL WORD TO OUR GRADUANDS

Now finally to the Graduands, as you step out into the world as qualified educators, remember the tremendous responsibility that lies ahead of you. You have the power to inspire the young minds, ignite their curiosity, create and shape their futures. Embrace this responsibility with open arms and with a profound understanding of the transformative power of education.

Once again, I congratulate you all on your graduation. Thank you.

(7 pages and 1,692 words)