

**MINUTES OF OAA YEAR GROUPS' REPRESENTATIVES' COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY, 22ND JANUARY, 2016 AT THE SSNIT GUEST HOUSE**

No.	ITEM	ACTION
1.0	<p>PRESENT: AKORAS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ernest Aryeetey - President 2. R O Nartey - 1956 Year Group Representative 3. Freda McEyeson - 1958 Year Group Representative 4. Sam Portuphy - 1961 Year Group Representative 5. Korkor Jobson - 1962 Year Group Representative 6. W. E. O. Apatu - 1962 Year Group Representative 7. Dr. Philipine Kuzoe - 1966 Year Group Representative 8. Adotei Brown - 1966 Year Group Representative 9. Daniel Attuah - 1970 Year Group Representative 10. Margaret Essamuah - 1973 Year Group Representative 11. Harold Richardson - 1976 Year Group Representative 12. Adzekwei Bekoe - 1979 Year Group Representative 13. Karl Tufuoh - 1979 Year Group Representative 14. Osei Sarfo Agyeman - 1981 Year Group Representative 15. Victoria Lugey - 1982 Year Group Representative 16. Gloria A Gyedu - 1986 Year Group Representative 17. David Lartey-Quarcoopome - 1987 Year Group Representative 18. Gladys Manteaw - 1989 Year Group Representative 19. Deila Assimeh - 1989 Year Group Representative 20. Kwame Adusa-Amankwa - 1989 Year Group Representative 21. Kathy Addy - 1990 Year Group Representative 22. Daniel Allan - 1991 Year Group Representative 23. Adjei-Bisa - 1991 Year Group Representative 24. Gloria Solomon-Zumaro - 2003 Year Group Representative 25. Linda Kpormone Buame - 2006 Year Group Representative 26. Eunice Quarcoopome - Executive Secretary <p>IN ATTENDANCE: 1. Marian Crabbe - Admin Assistant/Recorder (AA)</p>	
2.0	<p>OPENING Akora Eunice acted for the President, Akora Ernest Aryeetey until he arrived. Akora Harold Richardson said the opening prayer, and the meeting started at 6:12 pm.</p>	
3.0	<p>AOLOGIES Akora Jane Adomako sent her apologies for not being able to attend the meeting</p>	
4.0	<p>ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA The Agenda for the day was adopted by Akora Adjei-Bisa and the motion was seconded by Akora Victoria Lugey.</p>	
5.0	<p>CONFIRMATION AND ACCEPTANCE OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS MINUTES Corrections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Page 1,item 3.1, line 8, "...were made..." was corrected to read; "...were to be made..." <p>After the corrections above, Akora Adjei-Bisa moved for the acceptance of the previous meeting's minutes. Akora Victoria Lugey seconded the motion.</p>	
6.0 6.1	<p>BUSINESS FOR THE DAY President's Vision At this point the President arrived and presented his vision with the theme "The Rebirth of the Old Achimotan Association".</p> <p>He said he was happy to stand for the election for the position of President of the Old Achimotan Association (OAA), because he saw it as an opportunity to contribute to the ongoing rebirth of the Association to better serve the interests of present and future Akoras.</p> <p>Challenges Confronting Achimota School?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is every indication that the school's performance is generally lagging behind that of its peers. It is no longer seen as able to hold its own against those peers and even against lesser-known and less-endowed schools 	

- The school is under strong attack from a coalition of forces that seeks to take away its resources, especially its lands, while sharing its remaining facilities in a parasitic manner
- The Ghana Education Service is not in a position to assist the school to improve on its performance, and lacks the passion needed to see the School assert itself as the "Glory of the Coast". Under the strain of limited resources it has resigned itself to an equalization mission that risks pushing all public Ghanaian secondary schools in a rapid "race to the bottom"
- The current governance structure, with respect to the relationship between the school and its Governing Board on the one hand and Ghana Education Service on the other, makes it difficult for the school to realize its potential.

What is the Way Forward?

- Achimota School must be assisted to develop a new mission for itself and be empowered to implement it, taking into account the fact that it is easily one of the most endowed schools in Ghana and in Africa
- A new mission will require a new strategy to overcome the several structural bottlenecks the School faces, especially in the mobilization of financial resources
- A new mission must also aim to inject a fresh culture of achievement from students, staff and Akoras
- A new mission means the way the School and its resources are managed has to change
- The pedagogical approaches must be altered to reflect the new mission
- The School's Management must be able to take control of the School's resources, especially lands
- All these mean that greater decision-making authority needs to reside in the School Board and Management
- The way forward is also tied to greater collaboration between Management, parents and past students of the School.

What is the Role of the Old Achimotan Association in finding the Way Forward?

The OAA must be an instrument to facilitate the rebirth or transformation of Achimota School. The role of facilitator can be played in several ways:

1. Be an advocate for change in national policies relating to the structure and functions of the Ghana Education Service, especially in relation to senior high schools
2. Generate greater public interest in the need to strengthen and transform Achimota and other public senior high schools for significantly improved high school education
3. Generate ideas and suggestions to facilitate the mobilization of new resources for Achimota School
4. Directly assist the School Board and Management to reclaim lands that have been lost to encroachers
5. Mobilize all Akoras everywhere in the world to support the School in diverse ways, and to deepen friendships, mutual support and cooperation within and between year groups
6. Find new and easier ways for Akoras to mobilize funds for the School
7. Support the documentation of past and present experiences of the school and Akoras, across a wide range of themes to preserve the School's heritage

After the President had presented his vision, he explained that GES is supposed to be regulator of Schools and not managers of Schools. The School is not resourced adequately that is why it is suffering. The School Board in practice is made ineffective; decisions taken could be overthrown by

GES. He said these are some of the major issues he is campaigning to gain back. To achieve excellence for the school there is the need to motivate teachers not only with money but to raise their self esteem; interact with students to develop new pride. He said some teachers need not be in Achimota School also the existing teachers need orientation.

The perception that OAA wanted to take over the School should be understood that OAA is to assist the School to bring collaboration between the OAA and the School. He continued that what he can do is to talk to GES and other Schools on the change. The problem is not just Achimota School but secondary schools systems in Ghana.

Akora Allan supported the idea that poor performing teachers should not be allowed in the school; The President told the meeting that Universities have some flexibility implementing some decisions but the secondary do not have that flexibility. Formerly secondary school heads were allowed to recruit teachers but now GES appoint teachers for schools.

Akora Adjei-Bisa said when he was in school external teachers came to teach them on Mondays. In his view, the OAA should bring that practice back. Akora Eunice said she was not sure whether the Monday teaching still exists. She said volunteers had approached her with the intention to teach or talk to the students but the Headmistress had said there was no time for that. She appealed to the President to persuade the Headmistress to find time for the teaching and talks to the students. Akora Freda McEyeson suggested the School could use some time of their Entertainment period for the talks and the teaching.

Akora Osei S. Agyeman pointed out that the Head should be around to answer some of the vital questions being raised. Akora Korkor Jobson wanted to know whether the Golf Course pay some fees to the School. It was answered that they use to pay something minimal which was recently reviewed. Akora R. O. Nartey told the Akoras that even though he missed the previous meeting the decision that the Head could attend the OAA meetings as and when the OAA needed her was wrong. He said about 90% of OAA support go the School. Again the Constitution says as an ex-officio member it is mandatory for her to attend the OAA meetings; if she cannot attend she should send a delegation to attend.

Akora Daniel Attuah stated that the Golf Course has never been encroached because it is being used. He said regarding the encroachments, findings indicated that some Old Achimotans owns some portions of the land. In his view it will be very difficult for the School to achieve autonomy. The 1970 Year Group had already submitted proposal on the use of the land to the School Board and nothing had come out of it. In the proposal, the 1970 Year Group had suggested that the School use the free land at the encroached boundaries for farming; sell some of the proceeds and use the income raised to run the School; recruit teachers and the rest to feed the students. The President asked that the 1970 Year Group forward a copy of the proposal to him to study. Akora Eddie Quaye's contribution was that it appears consideration for autonomy would be given to schools that had started doing something for themselves. Akora R. O. Nartey wanted to know who owns Achimota School lands. The President said to the best of his knowledge the land was invested in the School Board but only the Government of Ghana has the authority to alter the use of the land.

Akora Adjei-Bisa told the meeting that he saw a model of Achimota School in South Africa with almost the same facilities; even though the School is older than Achimota all the facilities are functioning. Akora Harold Richardson supported the idea that OAA forge better management with the School, He said the Golf Course has protected the land all this while; he thought it was time for the OAA to make the School Board understand that it is their responsibility to safeguard the School land and also collaborate to re-look at the performance of the students.

He added that in the beginning Year Groups' Reps' meeting was organised monthly; last year it became dormant and now it has been agreed to attend the meeting bi-monthly. He said there is no consistency and that there is the need to look at it again. He also suggested the President attend the meeting with the some of the executive if not all. Akora R O. Nartey pointed out again that the OAA Constitution state that the Year Groups' Reps' meeting should be attended every month. In his view any changes must first be amended in the Constitution. The President said he was sure the meeting period was altered because of the poor attendance. He encouraged all to assist make the meetings interesting. It

	<p>was therefore necessary to look at the people’s interest and not just the constitution.</p> <p>In connection with the School Board safeguarding the land, the President said the School Boards are powerless, they know that whatever decision they take can be overthrown by the GES. The Heads of the Schools fear being dismissed should they implement any decision that had not been approved by GES. He therefore cautioned that the OAA should know how far they would like to support.</p> <p>Akora Bortei Doku wanted to know whether there will be any action coming out of what had been discussed so far. The President said it was his first meeting and that the various Sub-Committees will develop an action plan for use.</p> <p>Akora Korkor Jobson was disappointed at the GES appointments of poor teachers to the School. The President answered that one of the major challenges of the School had been the poor quality teachers posted to the School; he suggested that the OAA can organise to fight against that.</p> <p>Akora Allan added that some of the challenges also include mistakes in text books, and the young people’s laziness. Akora Portuphy said it was time the School became self-sufficient in handling its resources such as obtaining solar panels for the School and farming to feed the students.</p> <p>Akora Lartey-Quarcoopome said he did his national service as teacher in a village and he was asked not to give any student zero as marks obtained even if they could not write anything. The system also enabled students to complain that he was being too hard on them.</p> <p>Akora Richardson said that OAA had a lot of work to do and that was why he suggested the President attended the meeting with some of the executive members. He said over the years OAA had supported the School he thought it was time for the OAA to look at the welfare of its members so that together OAA could stand to face the problems.</p> <p>Reflecting on the discussions above, the President said there was the need to mobilize Akoras everywhere to make new friends for mutual support. He added that there are different ways of how people can support themselves. He encouraged Year Groups to support their members and do more for one another and also assist the young Akoras to secure jobs.</p> <p>Akora Allan said he observed that at the previous memorial service for departed Akoras the Association lost too many Akoras between the 1990 and 2000 Year Groups. In the offices also many young people lost their lives. He suggested organizing health talks to Akoras. Akora Adusa-Amankwa told Akoras that he had set up electronic cards which could give discount to Akoras. About 50 companies had been contacted and OAA could use it as a link to support Akoras.</p> <p>In conclusion, the President summarized all answers to the discussions above as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise meetings once a month if only meeting would be purposeful. • Work with other schools to change national policies relating to the structure and functions of the Ghana Education Service • Engage Forestry on how to maintain forestry to protect School land • How can the OAA create welfare for its members <p>Finally the President said it is the responsibility of the OAA to ensure resources for the School. He pledged to make things possible to make OAA exciting.</p>	
7.0	<p>REPORTS FROM YEAR GROUPS The 1966 Year Group invited Akoras to the Founders’ Day celebrations.</p>	
7.1	<p>Akora M. Sarfo Osei Agyeman said the 1981 Year Group had provided scholarship to needy children in the School. Two of the beneficiaries completed and were continuing at the University. He appealed to Akoras to support them.</p>	
7.2	<p>The 1987 Year Group had completed their swimming pool project and had handed over to the School. They had also given money to the supervisors of the pool.</p>	
7.3	<p>The 1989 Year Group said in connection with the death reported at the Games Field and the encroachments they had purchased four motorbikes to patrol the boundaries of the School lands. The group had completed their three washrooms project; one on the western compound, the second at the Chapel and the third at the Maintenance Department</p>	
7.4	<p>The 1991 Year Group said they would be responsible for hosting the Bonfire Night. They were looking at completing the Tennis Court project before the Founders’ day celebrations.</p>	

7.5	<p>Introduction Akora Gloria Solomon-Zumaro suggested members present introduce themselves. After the introduction she said the closing prayer.</p>	
8.0	<p>CLOSING Akoras shared the Grace to close the meeting at 8:19 pm.</p> <p>Recorded by Marian Crabbe Admin Assistant</p>	<p>Akora Ernest Aryeetey President</p>