



8th February 2022

Dear Akora,

Let me begin by apologizing for this rather long message to you. I am compelled to do this because OAA needs your help badly. The object of this message is to get you to commit, through your Year Group, to help raise \$10 million towards the OAA Centenary Project. I am not necessarily asking for your own money, but I would like you to join the ACHIMOTA MOVEMENT to raise the amount over a 5-year period, ending in 2027.

Let me make the case for it first:

I attended a meeting of the Achimota School Board recently and I left the meeting extremely worried about the state of the School and its future. I knew that the School had many challenges, but the meeting opened my eyes to several other things I had not paid much attention to previously. The School has problems with finding teachers as these come only through the Ghana Education Service, and the School Management and Board have no way of influencing who gets to teach at Achimota School. All the old buildings of the School need to be rewired. The entire water system is in shambles. The sewage system has been destroyed by encroachers, and we heard about current severe problems on the Western Compound and at Kwapong House. There is considerable overcrowding in the classrooms and in the dormitories, and this is going to worsen with the ending of the two-track system. More than a half of the teaching staff do not have accommodation at the School. There are hardly any functioning street lights on this vast compound. The School does not have enough security personnel. There are indeed many other problems, but these are the big ones. I won't say anything about land for now.

You might shrug your shoulders and say "These are problems for GES to deal with" and you would be right. Unfortunately, I do not believe that GES can deal with these, assuming they were interested.

Over the years, the OAA has done its best to help tackle some of these challenges through the interventions that Year Groups offer by way of legacy projects and other things. While these have been laudable and very useful, it appears to me that we are only scratching the surface of a major structural problem. The truth is Achimota School needs far more than we can deal with on our own as Year Groups.

There are two things I would like us to work together to achieve over the next five years:

1. Appeal to and work with the Government of Ghana, Ministry of Education, Ghana Education Service, and other similar schools, to improve on school governance in such a manner as to give greater decision-making authority or independence to the School Board. This is with respect to appointing the School Head; appointing and disciplining teachers and other staff of the School; determining the School's curriculum and calendar to meet standards set by the Ghana Education Service and other international expectations; determining the revenue sources of the School; and approving all expenditures.

2. Have an endowment fund of \$10 million for the School by March 2027 as a gift of from OAA to celebrate 100 years of Achimota School and enable the strengthened School Board to pursue a strategic plan that will lead to a new Achimota School 'fit-for-purpose' for another century. The fund will be managed by a revamped, strengthened and professionally managed Achimota School Endowment Trust Fund (ASETF).

On the endowment fund target, the proposal is as follows:

a. We will raise \$1 million by December 2022 to be used for constructing a brand new 250-seater state-of-the-art auditorium to be known as the *OAA Centenary Auditorium*. We have already raised \$40,000 from some Akoras towards this project. If each Year Group (1970-2010) pledged to raise \$25,000 for this, we would be fine. Do you want to join this initiative? It does not have to be your own money, and this is what fund raising is all about. Be part of the ACHIMOTA MOVEMENT!

b. The remaining \$9 million would be raised by each Year Group (1970-2010) pledging to mobilize \$56,000 annually for 4 years. Again, this does not have to be your own money, but money that you raise through your contacts, your employers, your business associates, parents of current students, and the public.

Once we place the amount of \$9 million in the ASETF investment account and it is properly invested in appropriate instruments, it should be able to generate a conservative return of about \$1 million annually to augment the School's annual budget.

What are the benefits to us as Akoras? Once we agree and begin working on this. we can stop the 'obligatory' Year Group Legacy projects. We can consider some exemptions for those Groups that have already done their "50 years" Legacy Project. The beauty of this is that we no longer must harass ourselves into selecting projects as this is left to a professional team to manage. The OAA will have a permanent recognition for all those who make significant contributions to the fund. The biggest benefit to us is that we will see the transformation of Achimota School in our lifetime.

I have deliberately left out Year Groups from before 1970 with the assumption that most of them are over 70 years old and may not have the drive for doing fund-raising. Having said that, they are very strongly encouraged to make voluntary contributions. We will even accept houses donated to OAA to be sold for proceeds to go into the Endowment Fund. Indeed, last Saturday, we began negotiations with one Akora for the OAA to take over a property to be sold. I will write more about that later.

Akora, next week the meeting of Year Group Reps and Presidents will take place. I would like you to engage your President and have a discussion with him/her about this proposal before the meeting. I will be giving more details and answering any questions that you might have at the meeting. You can call me to discuss the proposal or send me email through the Secretariat, especially if you would like to make suggestions about how best to achieve our targets. I accept that this approach may not necessarily be the best, and I am willing to listen to you.

Please note that we are also planning an event (Achimota Speaks) to commemorate Achimota @ 95 during the Founders' Day celebrations in March. As part of the commemoration we will launch the planning process for celebrating Achimota @ 100.

Finally, I would like to remind you that we have our Annual General Meeting scheduled for Sunday, 24th April 2022. Please use the time to think about who you would like to see in charge of OAA as we work towards the renaissance of Achimota School. Help me to leave office with a huge smile on my face as I watch your pledges come through, and as you pay your dues for 2022. Can we help make Achimota School a better place for several generations?

I thank you for your attention.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ernest Aryeetey', written in a cursive style.

Ernest Aryeetey
OAA President