

**MINUTES OF OAA PRESIDENTS/YEAR GROUPS' REPRESENTATIVES' COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD ON ZOOM ON FRIDAY 8TH OCTOBER 2021**

No.	ITEM	ACTION
1.0	<p>PRESENT: AKORAS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ernest Aryeetey - 1973 Year Group Representative, Chairman T. C. Asante - 1955 Year Group Representative Freda McEyeson - 1958 Year Group Representative Sam Portuphy - 1961 Year Group Representative Kwame Boakye - 1963 Year Group Representative General Coleman - 1964 Year Group Representative George Andoh - 1965 Year Group Representative Gladys Quarshie - 1969 Year Group Representative Joyce Addo - 1972 Year Group Representative Gordon Quartey - 1974 Year Group Representative Eunice Quarcoopome - 1975 Year Group Representative Candy Kisseih - 1977 Year Group Representative Isaac Quist - 1977 Year Group Representative Samuel Uzo Nwankwo - 1977 Year Group Representative Stella Afriyie-Ankrah - 1988 Year Group Representative Harold Esseku - 1988 Year Group Representative Beryl Stanley Marbell - 1989 Year Group Representative Olive Asisseh - 1994 Year Group Representative Justice Annan - 1996 Year Group Representative Kwame Nkrumah Botsio - 1997 Year Group Representative John Opoku - 1997 Year Group Representative Yaa Dankwa Ampadu-Sackey-1997 Year Group Representative Ralph Tettey Amlalo - 1997 Year Group Representative Kwaku Owusu Opoku - 2003 Year Group Representative Gloria B. Wiredu - 2003 Year Group Representative Martin Dei - 2004 Year Group Representative Mawuli Akpe - 2011 Year Group Representative Wilma Okwabi - 2011 Year Group Representative <p>Marian Crabbe - AA/Recorder</p>	
2.0	<p>OPENING</p> <p>Akora President called the meeting to order at 6.08 pm and welcomed Akoras to the first Year Groups' Representatives' meeting of the year. He reminded Akoras that it was a requirement of the OAA Constitution to meet every quarter, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic it had not been possible to meet. The resort to a virtual meeting was to deal with the situation. He said it had become necessary to meet on this occasion so that all would know what was going on within the OAA and the School, and also answer any questions that Akoras might have.</p> <p>Akora Yaa Dankwa Ampadu-Sackey prayed to start the meeting, and it was followed by a roll-call of the Decade Year Groupings led by the Executive Secretary, Akora Eunice Quarcoopome. After the roll-call Akoras present introduced themselves.</p>	

3.0	<p>OAA Activities</p> <p>The Executive Secretary (ES) briefed the meeting about what the OAA had been doing since the beginning of the year.</p>
3.0.1	<p>Legacy Projects</p> <p>ES observed that because many things had changed as a result of the pandemic, most events were being done virtually. Unfortunately, there was no Bonfire and no Founders' Day celebration, but the celebrating Year Groups, 1997 and 1971, carried on with the under listed projects:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1971 Year Group provided Solar Power at the School for selected buildings. They also provided costings for other parts of the school so that other Year Groups extend the project if they were interested. Interested Year Groups may contact the Secretariat to link them up with the 1971 Year Group. 2. The 1997 Year Group worked on providing Wi-Fi for major parts of the school which included the New Science Block, Administration Block, classrooms, the bungalows of the Head and Assistant Heads, Western Compound and the OAA Secretariat. Despite the pandemic work had continued.
3.0.2	<p>OAA Database</p> <p>The OAA Secretariat was building its database to consolidate all contact lists. This would allow for easier contact with Akoras in Ghana and abroad. Year Group Presidents or Representatives were requested to submit their WhatsApp contact lists with telephone numbers so that the Secretariat would be able put all together in order to reach out to as many Akoras as possible.</p>
3.0.3	<p>Security</p> <p>The OAA-Tullow Science Block was finally handed over to the School by the OAA Executive Committee. The School has now taken responsibility for the building, but the OAA has committed to provide 24-hour security for one year when the School should be able to increase its security strength in order to cover the building.</p>
3.0.4	<p>Annual Memorial and Thanksgiving Service for Departed Akoras</p> <p>The OAA would hold its Annual Memorial and Thanksgiving Service for departed Akoras on 14th November 2021. Year Groups that had lost members were expected to send details of their deceased mates to the Secretariat as soon as possible to generate a comprehensive list and have a nice service for them.</p>
3.0.5	<p>Night of Nine Lessons and Carols</p> <p>The OAA in partnership with the school would hold a Virtual Carols Service on 12th December 2021. It was observed that, because of the pandemic the school could not hold gatherings and so the school choir could not meet to rehearse. It was explained that the Carols Service was actually a School programme, but the OAA would provide a choir in the absence of the School Choir for the virtual service. More detail would be provided closer to the event date.</p> <p>Akora President added that an "Evening of Remembrance" had been held for former teacher Akora Larry Cobbson of the 1961 Year Group earlier in September 2021. He thanked all those who were able to join, especially his Year Group, for the support that they gave to the family and to the OAA.</p>

<p>3.0.6</p>	<p>Comments from Various Year Groups</p> <p>Akora Joyce Addo of the 1972 Year Group wanted to know more about the legacy projects going on and the way forward for the 1972 Year Group. She said that her Year Group had inaugurated a Virtual Library project a few years earlier. At that time the internet connection was not good on the compound; so they paid for internet connectivity but later found out that it was not being utilized. They therefore discontinued the subscription. They were getting ready for their 50th anniversary legacy project next year and were considering reviving the project among other things that they wanted to do. She had been mandated by her colleagues to ask whether it was a useful project. The meeting suggested to her that, in view of the fact that the 1997 Year Group had put in a lot of Wi-Fi connectivity around the school, it would be a good time to revive the virtual library project.</p> <p>The meeting agreed that the OAA Projects Committee, which was chaired by Akora Harold Esseku and who was expected to join the meeting later, could be tasked to look at this project and provide some feedback to the group.</p>	<p>Akora Harold Esseku</p>
	<p>Akora Wilma Okwabi of the 2011 Year Group informed the meeting that she was frequently asked by her colleagues about what benefit one derived from paying OAA dues. She said that when she informed Akoras that dues were used to run the Secretariat, they found that unsatisfactory. A few of her colleagues wanted to know the exact benefit that they would as individuals derive from paying dues to the OAA.</p> <p>Akora President responded that paying dues was like paying taxes; one pays dues to OAA without the expectation of any direct personal benefit. It was a civic responsibility. What should be important was whether the OAA was able to account for the money it received from its members; and that the money was used for the legitimate business of the OAA as provided for by law. He further explained that Akoras could look at the benefits that they derived as being implicit in their membership of the OAA. Having attended Achimota School and thus becoming an Akora or a member of the OAA, should bring one enormous immeasurable benefits and a great source of pride. Akora President further disclosed how much the Secretariat received in terms of dues payments which came to about GHC54,000.00 for 2020. About GHC48,000.00 of this was used to pay only salaries. Other expenditures include transport, website maintenance, meeting logistics, etc.</p> <p>Akora President encouraged Akora Wilma to get her colleagues to understand that using the dues to run the office was a good cause, sanctioned by the Constitution. The uses of all funds could be verified from the detailed published audited accounts available on the OAA website. Akora President also stated that if more people paid their dues regularly, there would be no need to set up ad hoc funds, such as the land fund to raise money to pay lawyers, and funds to support the School at the National Science and Maths Quiz, etc. He said many things done in the name of OAA were often paid for by a few individuals.</p> <p>Akora Stella Afriyie Ankrah's question was about the projects list. She referred to what Akora President had said was a new list and wanted to know where they could</p>	

find it. She was aware that a list of projects had been categorized into short, medium and long term, and so it would be good to know this in order to inform their choices. Akora President said he would ask ES to share with Year Group Reps the projects list that was discussed by the ExCo on 4th October 2021.

Akora
Eunice

Akora Yaa Dankwa Ampadu-Sackey commented on the planned publication of members in good standing. She thought Akoras needed to find a way of making their Year Group members appreciate the fact that being an Akora was a valuable brand which offered networking opportunities. Akoras needed to understand the responsibility that went with this opportunity. For those who lived abroad, the usual narrative was that their children were not going to attend Achimota School, and so of what use was it to them to be active in the OAA. She noted that while some Year Groups were doing their best to change this narrative, it would be better if a clearer message about what it meant to be an Akora went out from the OAA. She said it was very sad for Akoras to refer to the planned publication of Akoras in good standing as a "name and shame" exercise. She further observed that for most membership organizations there was always the expectation that a list of members in good standing would be published. This helped the Associations to iron out any inconsistencies in their data. She also said it would help if the Secretariat would be prompt in acknowledging receipt of payments made by members. She cited several instances where members had made payments and it had taken several months for those payments to be acknowledged.

Akora Kwaku Opoku spoke on behalf of the 2003 Year Group. He wanted to know why payment of dues took effect even when most of them were not engaged or active. In the opinion of his colleagues, payment of dues should start from when they joined the Association. Again, they wanted to know who a full member of the OAA was and whether one became an Akora only when one paid dues.

Akora President responded that the fact that they completed a programme at Achimota School made them eligible to join the Old Achimotan Association. He said once they joined the Association they had the responsibility to pay dues in order to be in good standing.

Akora Gordon Quartey stated that having gone through the school entitles one to become an Akora. However, at the end of the day, the payment of dues would become voluntary because one could attend the school and decide not to be interested in the OAA and its activities. In that case one would not be obligated to pay dues to OAA. He was of the view that publishing the names of those in good standing would not really help to increase the number of Akoras who would pay dues. Akora Gordon Quartey also stated that he was aware of the fact that so many things had been achieved by the OAA, including successful land litigation, a new science block, improved security and pursuit of autonomy for the school, etc. He said that if Akoras could be educated about the things that OAA had done using funds from other sources, this might encourage them to pay their dues. Akoras needed the assurance that the OAA did not intend to continue asking them for money in perpetuity because the OAA was trying to raise at least \$10,000,000 to be invested in

the Endowment Fund which would take care of the needs of the school. He believed this approach would be more successful in getting more Akoras on board.

Akora Joyce Addo thought that the payment of individual dues by members was not well publicized. She compared it to the collection of Year Group levies by Akora Selina Danso for the Achimota School Endowment Trust Fund who reminded her at the beginning of every year about the endowment fund levy of GHC500. She wondered if the Association could not structure dues payment in such a way that Year Groups would pay a flat fee as was the case for the endowment fund. Akora President commented that the request was worth thinking about.

Akora Isaac Quist said he had been thinking about how to turn the whole business of dues payment into something that would be a more positive experience for Akoras so that it would encourage more Akoras to want to pay. Akora Quist wanted a more detailed justification of how the dues were used to run the OAA Secretariat. To do this required a detailed account of how the Secretariat functioned. Akoras needed to be told exactly what functions were performed by the Secretariat and how much it cost.

Akora Candy Kisseih reported that the 1977 Year Group constructed a foot bridge to connect the Eastern and Western compounds. The bridge had been difficult to do and was very involving. They had finished it and handed it over to the school. Akora Candy Kisseih also spoke strongly against publishing the names of those who had paid their dues.

Akora Mona Quartey disagreed with those who objected to the OAA publishing names of those in good standing. She was surprised that some Akoras thought that publishing a list of those who had paid their dues meant that those who had not paid were being put to shame. For her, it was just so that those who had paid would know that indeed they were on the list of paid-up members, and those who had not yet paid would be reminded to go and pay. Akora Mona Quartey said that based on her extensive background in Treasury Management, she thought it was a good idea for the Secretariat to put out that list and so should consider doing it.

Akora Isaac Quist spoke about the plans for the Endowment Fund. He wanted to know if Achimota School had a strategic plan and wondered where the OAA expected to see Achimota School in the next 5 years, and what road map the OAA was pursuing in trying to achieve this. He thought that placing an Endowment Fund in the context of a clear strategy for development and growth probably made the idea a bit more compelling and inviting for people to contribute.

Akora President responded that Achimota School did not have a strategic plan but the School Board was working on one. He explained further that the Ghana Education Service currently plans for all schools and so schools have not been required to prepare their own strategic plans. One of the reasons why OAA was pushing very hard for a more independent status for Achimota School and other schools was that the schools would be free to develop their own plans for the future. The plan to grow the Endowment Trust Fund would ensure that OAA was in a

position to support the school in the pursuit of its capital projects, especially in maintaining its facilities.

In his contribution, Akora Nikoi Kotey said that following the discussions about dues payment and other obligations, he had become more sympathetic to the concerns of younger Akoras who had asked questions about what assistance the OAA as an organization would be able to provide for younger Akoras. While he did not necessarily agree or subscribe to the notion that dues payment and active participation in the OAA should be tied to what an Akora deemed himself or herself to be gaining from the OAA, he wondered if the Executive Committee would consider a formalized programme of mentorship, placement and networking for younger Akoras. He noted that in other parts of the world, that was one of the more tangible benefits that an alumni association would be able to provide. He thought that perhaps if the OAA was seen to be actively engaged in those kinds of activities Akoras would feel that there was a benefit and they might be more inclined to pay their dues. He strongly thought the Executive Committee should consider those kinds of needs.

Akora President responded that the Executive Committee would have no problem with supporting younger Akoras through mentorship and other similar engagements. The situation could however be likened to a “chicken and egg” situation. He lamented the fact younger Akoras showed no interest in the OAA and wondered how they could initiate changes without being active in the Association. He implored them to show greater interest in the OAA and the OAA would be responsive to their needs. He also said the OAA would consider seriously various initiatives to support younger Akoras.

Akora T. C. Asante wanted to know if some category of OAA members were exempted from paying dues. Akora President confirmed that this was the case and invited the Executive Secretary to explain further. ES explained that Akoras who had celebrated 50 years of leaving school pay 50% of the dues, while Akoras aged 80 years and above were exempted from paying dues, but might make donations.

Akora Kwame Boakye, a member of the Executive Committee added his voice to all that had been said about strengthening the OAA. He noted that nobody on the ExCo was interested in embarrassing anybody. He noted further that since joining the ExCo he had come to understand better the unhelpful role that the Ghana Education Service plays in Achimota School business. He thought that all Akoras, both young and old, needed to stand together and support the School.

Akora Gordon Quartey referred to Akora President’s introductory statement that the meeting was supposed to held quarterly, and noted that this meeting happened to be the first meeting of the year. He wanted to know when the minutes of the meeting would be ready and also when the next meeting would be. Akora President responded that he hoped to have the minutes before the end of October 2021. The next meeting would be scheduled for January 2022.

	<p>Akora Sam Portuphy shared with the meeting his very positive experience with getting his Year Group members to pay their dues. He narrated how a few days earlier he had gotten Akora Gloria Wiredu from the Secretariat to send him the list for their dues payments. After analyzing it, he sent it to members and most of them responded positively.</p>	
6.0	<p>Centenary Project Akora President reported that Achimota School would be 100 years old in 2027. Even though it was 6 years away, the ExCo thought it would be good to solicit from Akoras what they thought would be a good OAA Legacy Project for Achimota at 100. He disclosed that one of the propositions considered by the ExCo was to replace what was known by all as the Science Lecture Theatre at the old Science Block with a new large Auditorium where larger meetings and lectures could take place. He observed that it took 3 years to build the OAA-Tullow Science Block, and so if OAA adopted and started this as the centenary legacy project earlier, there would be enough time to complete it and the pressure on OAA would be less. Akoras were encouraged to submit any other suggestions they might have for celebrating Achimota School@100 to the Secretariat.</p> <p>Akora Isaac Quist observed that the last time anybody wrote the history of Achimota School was for the 50th anniversary celebration, and was done by Prof. Agbodeka. He said 50 years on would be a good time to consider another one. Akora President commented that it was one of the things that the ExCo had considered and would discuss with Akora Prof Ivan Addae-Mensah who had a lot of material and experience to be used for such a project.</p> <p>In closing, Akora President noted that the intention of the ExCo was to develop the OAA into a 'fit-for-purpose organization'; one that delivered good service to its members, and also achieved the objective of making Achimota School great, even in trying times.</p>	
	<p>CLOSING In the absence of any other business, Akora Yaa Dankwa Ampadu-Sackey moved for the meeting to close. Akora Harold Esseku seconded the motion and prayed to close the meeting at 9.14pm.</p> <p>Recorded by Marian Crabbe</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Akora Ernest Aryeetey President</p>	