

REPORT ON STAKEHOLDERS' ENGAGEMENTS HELD IN THE GREATER ACCRA REGION FROM 2ND SEPTEMBER, 2019, TO 27TH OCTOBER, 2021.

The National Schools Inspectorate Authority (NaSIA), formerly the National Inspectorate Board (NIB), is mandated by the Education Regulatory Bodies Act 2020 (Act 1023) to develop, publish, promote and enforce highest quality standards and guidelines for quality education in public and private pre-tertiary educational schools in Ghana. The Authority is also responsible for licensing all public and private pre-tertiary schools in Ghana.

As a matter of fact, NaSIA's engagements across the country began in the Greater Accra region. These included workshops for Inspectors, consultative meetings, meetings with school leadership and parents to address concerns, disagreements and grievances.

Some of these engagements involved Sector Ministers (specifically the Minister of Education and the Minister of Finance).

As of 2019, the Education Regulatory Bodies Act 2020 (Act 1023) had not been passed into law by Ghana's parliament. Hence, NaSIA's early engagement and/or training focused on an introduction to its envisioned mandates which included the enforcement of best practices relating to school Inspections and license.

It is important to emphasise that some of the engagements were in direct response to parental complaints and parent-management school standoffs in schools. Engagements with school authorities and parents have been very fruitful per the subsequent agreements reached and mutual actions taken.

A 5-DAY WORKSHOP ON INTERNATIONAL PRACTICES FOR MASTER TRAINERS: 2ND TO 5TH SEPTEMBER, 2019.

Since school Inspection remain very critical to NaSIA's operations, training master trainers to train Inspectors in their various regions was of a high priority in NaSIA's strategic scheme of activities. Consequently, a 5-day training on international best practices was organised for master trainers. Overall, there were forty-three (43) participants drawn from the University of Cape Coast (UCC), University of Education (UEW), National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NaCCA), National Teaching Council (NTC), National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) and Efford Education Consult. Lead Inspectors from NaSIA were also participants at this training programme.

The involvement of sister agencies in the training speaks to the great need for strategic collaboration and data-sharing among the various agencies under the Ministry of Education. This is particularly necessary if the ultimate aim of improving national learning outcomes is to be achieved.

In terms of specifics, master trainers were introduced to research-driven diverse International best practices in school Inspections. They were also taken through an overview of the accepted methods used in analysing students' outcomes. The principles of effective teaching as adhered to by effective teachers around the world were extensively discussed and demonstrated within a Ghanaian context. There were also sessions on how to observe lessons using available evidence to feedback, feedforward and feed side-ways.

Other important lessons covered at the workshop included the rudiments of leading a school Inspection, the characteristics essential to the effectiveness of lead inspectors. The workshop trainers also elaborated on the principles involved in the monitoring and quality-assuring of Inspections. All these were done bearing in mind the characteristics both of effective training and the effective trainer.

Overall, master trainers came out of the training with an enhanced knowledge about the utmost need for positive reinforcement as indicated in NaSIA's 2019 Revised Handbook for the Inspection of Public and Private Pre-Tertiary Schools in Ghana.

**SENSITISATION MEETING FOR SISTER MoE AGENCIES HELD ON 20TH NOVEMBER, 2019,
AT THE NaSIA CONFERENCE ROOM**

NaSIA organised a sensitisation meeting to update all sister MoE agencies on its new Inspection approach and school performance reporting. The Agencies that were represented at the meeting were the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NaCCA), National Teaching Council (NTC), Technical and Vocational Education Division, (TVED), Ghana Education Service (GES), National Accreditation Board (NAB), amongst others.

The IGS took participants through NaSIA's Inspections and reporting framework. The lead Statistician at NaSIA also briefed participants on the sampling statistical approach used. Questions on the sampling of TVED schools and measurement of Special Education Needs were all addressed at this meeting.

PHOTOS FROM THE MEETING



SENSITISATION MEETING FOR GHANA EDUCATION SERVICE (GES): NaSIA CONFERENCE ROOM (22nd NOVEMBER, 2019)

The Ghana Education Service is the biggest agency of the Ministry of Education. By law, it is the proprietor of public schools on behalf of the Government of Ghana. This explains why NaSIA organised a sensitization meeting for selected officials from the Ghana Education Service. This meeting was to introduce them to NaSIA's new Inspection approach and school performance reporting.

Present at the meeting were the Director of Special Education Division (SPED), Bernice Aduo Addae, Director, Basic and Secondary Education Division (BSED), Patty E. Assan and Director, Technical and Vocational Education Division (TVED), Seth Danso Appau. The IGS took members through NaSIA's Inspection approach. This was followed by a presentation by NaSIA's lead statistician on sampling approaches as employed by NaSIA.

NaSIA duly updated the participants about the structure of its complaints system/procedure. This procedure meant that schools were at liberty to lodge complaints, especially when they have reasons to suspect any variance between inspections conducted and the consequent reports issued.

It is important to emphasize that the Director of BSED announced a policy direction that among other things, consisted in the change of the name "Circuit Supervisor" to "School Improvement Support Officer".

ENGAGEMENT WITH THE HONOURABLE MINISTER (HON. DR. MATTHEW OPOKU PREMPEH) AND THE ASSOCIATION OF INTERNATIONAL CERTIFICATION SCHOOLS (ASICS): MINISTER’S CONFERENCE ROOM (22ND SEPTEMBER, 2020)

The Minister of Education, Honourable Dr. Matthew Opoku Prempeh, offered the necessary support to NaSIA in its engagement processes.

One of this was when he chaired an important meeting between NaSIA and ASICS. This meeting discussed issues relating to school re-opening after the initial ravages of the COVID-19 pandemic. Also present at the meeting were NaSIA’s Board Chairman, Prof. Eric Wilmot and six (6) executive members of ASICS.

Concerns raised by the association included the high fees of registration (now licensing), conditionalities associated with the re-opening of schools, among others.

It is worth emphasizing that this meeting resolved a number of important issues. The aftermath of the resolutions saw an official directive for ASICS to license with NaSIA and submit their COVID-19 management plan before re-opening. ASICS appealed for schools to be allowed to make an initial payment of the licensing application fee of GHS 500 and defer payment of departmental fees. In principle, NaSIA indicated its willingness to look into the school licensing fees.

MEETING WITH GIU INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN SCHOOL: NASIA CONFERENCE ROOM
(6TH MAY, 2020)

The GIU International Christian School was called into a meeting following a complaint received from some concerned parents. The meeting aimed at finding an amicable solution to a standoff emanating from the dissolution of the school's Parent Teacher Association (PTA). Present at this meeting were the Proprietor (Dr. Hwasook Yim), Administrator (Mr Samuel Yim), General Administrator (Mr Emmaneul Kulor), Ex. PTA Chairperson (Mr Eddie Quaye) and a parent (Ms Rita Sena Agbeko).

There was a successful resolution of the conflict by the IGS and her team of NaSIA officials. Among other things, it was agreed that GIU International Christian School should engage parents via Zoom to discuss and agree on the Online Learning Modalities. The school was also to write to parents concerning the formation of a PTA and constitute same by the end of May 2020. The IGS emphasised that NaSIA's interest is not to close down schools but to ensure that schools continue to deliver quality education.

MEETING WITH ALPHA BETA EDUCATIONAL CENTRES AND SOME CONCERNED PARENTS: NaSIA CONFERENCE ROOM (11TH MAY, 2020)

NaSIA hosted the management of Alpha Beta Educational Centres and some parents during this meeting. The parental concerns that NaSIA dealt with related to the lack of a PTA, lack of permission to organize a third-term programme. There were also concerns about the charging of unrealistic levies for online learning programmes and the widespread disagreement of parent about the school's online learning approach.

In attendance were the proprietors (Rev. Samuel Adjepong and Dr. Naomi Adjepong) and two parents (Mr and Mrs Stanley Yankson). In line with conflict resolution standards, each party had the opportunity to present their case respectfully.

Overall, it was concluded that the school had permission to organise a third term online learning. School leadership agreed to explain the modalities relating to the online learning programme to parents. NASIA leadership also requested for an update from the school with regards to steps taken and the progress attained. The school's decision to organise a forum to address all parental concerns attested to the success or fruitfulness of this particular meeting.

MEETING WITH BEACON COLLEGE AND SOME CONCERNED PARENTS: NaSIA CONFERENCE ROOM (12TH MAY, 2020)

Upon receiving a petition from some concerned parents of Beacon College International, NaSIA called a meeting to address them. The concerns were mainly about the 10% bursary discount on the third term fees on virtual learning, the timeline for the payment of third term fees and the absence of a functional Parent Teacher Association (PTA). In attendance were the Executive Director (Ken Cyril Nartey), the Principal (Mrs Nasin Siddeqi) and two parents (Mr Kojo Poku and Mrs Hannah Nyarko).

After the necessary deliberations, the school leadership agreed to review the contentious 10% discount on third term fees to a reasonably higher percentage. There was also a resolution to invite all parents to a Zoom meeting for purposes of agreeing on the online learning modalities.

NaSIA maintained that it was important for the school to avoid any action that could be interpreted as a victimization of the parents who championed the petition. Parents also agreed not to pull their wards from the online learning programme.

Once again, the IGS iterated the fact that NaSIA's interest is to ensure that schools continue to deliver quality education for the benefit of all.

CONSULTATIVE MEETING WITH PRIVATE SCHOOL OWNERS AND INTERNATIONAL CURRICULA SCHOOL PROPRIETORS: GHANA LIBRARY AUTHORITY (3RD JUNE, 2020)

This meeting was chaired by the Deputy Minister of Education (General Education), Honourable Dr. Yaw Osei Adutwum. It was convened for school owners and proprietors running online learning programmes. Other dignitaries present were the Chief Director of MoE, Mr. Benjamin K. Gyasi and Lawyer Irene Osei Bonsu, member of NaSIA's Governing Council. Also present were a total of seventy (70) school proprietors. The meeting dealt with petitions received from parents, Standards for Online Learning and the registration (now licensing) of International Certification Schools.

Participants were taken through the regulation of private pre-tertiary schools by the IGS. Dr. Adwutwum also gave his keynote address. The meeting was also addressed by the Chief Director of the MOE.

Key concerns raised by participants were about the supposed non-involvement of schools in the drafting of the Education Regulatory Bodies Bill (2019), the reduction of contact hours upon resumption of schools, the plea for the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA) to give schools more time to pay taxes, among others. All these were appropriately addressed by the IGS and other dignitaries present.

The IGS also walked participants through the registration of International Curricular Schools. She emphasised that the registration of schools has been taken over by NaSIA. She gave participants an overview of the school registration process and the payment modalities. Specifically, she indicated that the registration fee cost GHS 2500. According to the IGS, this fee covers the cost of inspecting one department per school and logistics. It was then concluded that the registration of International Certification Schools should start from the 2020/21 academic year.

In closing the meeting, the Deputy Minister asked schools to register with NaSIA at the agreed fee. He also tasked them to engage with parents to get their buy-in regarding fees for online learning programmes and also comply with all directives to prevent the official closure of their online programmes.

PHOTOS FROM THE CONSULTATIVE MEETING



From left to right, the Chief Director, the Deputy Minister, General Education – MoE, the Executive Director and a member of Council – NIB.



Deputy Minister, General Education – MoE, delivering his keynote address



The Chief Director, MoE briefing participants on the petitions received so far by the NIB



The Executive Director, NIB giving her opening remarks.



Participants listening with rapt attention



Some School Owners/Proprietors expressing their concerns on the actions taken by some parents and some measures taken to address identified issues



NIB Staff explaining the NIB Standards for Online Learning



The Executive Director, NIB giving an overview of the Registration of International Certification Schools



Deputy Minister giving his closing remarks

MEETING ON NaSIA's MODALITIES FOR THE RE-OPENING OF SCHOOLS : VIA ZOOM (11TH SEPTEMBER, 2020)

Most pre-tertiary schools in March 2020 were closed by the government in an attempt to contain the COVID-19. There was thus the need for NaSIA to engage various schools after the President ordered for the re-opening of schools for final-year learners. This particular meeting was held via Zoom. It outlined some requirements that were expected to be complied with by the schools concerned before and during the period of re-opening.

Specifically, emphasis was laid on the particular learners who were required to go back to school per the president's directive. Among other things, schools were required to license with NaSIA and submit their COVID-19 Management /Re-opening Plan for review and approval prior to re-opening. School Proprietors were taken through the requirements as expected in the COVID-19 Management/Re-opening Plan. The IGS reiterated that NaSIA is poised to support schools and for that matter, learners in minimising the impact of COVID-19 on teaching and learning outcomes.

MEETING WITH ASSOCIATION OF INTERNATIONAL CERTIFICATION SCHOOLS (ASICS) TO DISCUSS SCHOOL REGISTRATION COST AMONG OTHERS: NaSIA CONFERENCE ROOM (7TH OCTOBER, 2020)

The Chairman of NaSIA's Governing Council, Prof. Eric Wilmot, chaired a meeting with ASICS to discuss the registration fees of International Curricular Schools. There was also the discussion of the resumption of schools for 1BDP1 learners. Present at this meeting were five (5) leading members of ASICS, Mrs. Florence Adjepong, Dr. John Kpikpi, Mrs Mabel Owusu-Addo, Mr Ken Nartey and Mrs Audrey Doryumu.

The Board Chair detailed the cost of inspecting schools per department to the understanding of all present. It was agreed at the meeting that only approved learners were to resume school due to COVID-19. Eventually, the schools agreed to honour the decision concerning the payment of all outstanding balance.

A TWO-DAY STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOP WITH HEADS OF PRIVATE AND INTERNATIONAL CURRICULAR SCHOOLS (ICS): OAK PLAZA HOTEL (20TH – 21ST JANUARY 2021)

This 2-day stakeholder engagement presented to heads of Private and International Curricular Schools the final draft of NaSIA's School Licensing Policy (SLiP) and School Establishment and Inspection Policy (SEaIP). The presentation was to solicit their review, input and recommendations.

This meeting was opened by the IGS and it was attended by seventy-nine (79) participants. The consultants who worked on the policy documents took time to explain them to participants. Participants made diverse inputs regarding the definition of some terms, policy statements and others. The IGS also took members through the cost of Inspection and emphasised that realistically speaking, schools do not bear the full cost of Inspections which is GHS 5,193.00.

PHOTOS FROM THE ENGAGEMENT



IGS giving her opening remark



One of the Consultants giving highlights on the policy



Group work on the School Establishment and Inspection Policy (SEaIP)



Group members deliberating on their assigned Chapters



Group representatives presenting on their feedback



Participants seeking further clarification during the Q & A session



IGS giving her closing remark

BANK OF GHANA: BANKING SUPERVISION DEPARTMENT (27TH OCTOBER, 2021)

NaSIA's engagement has not been limited to schools only. The IGS met with a team from the Banking Supervision Division of the Bank of Ghana (BoG). The aim was to deliberate on NaSIA's mandate relating to school licensing as pertains to banks requesting evidence of licensing before transacting business with schools. Also present were nine (9) officials from the BoG. They were Ms Sarah Ofori, Mr Osei Gyasi, Mr Desmond Agbogah, Ms Esther Quaye, Rev. Kwasi Twum and Mr George Akrofi-Addo.

The IGS explained the rationale behind a recent directive that was sent to commercial banks. She indicated that the directive was meant for new schools opening accounts and not for existing ones. Though they accepted the clarification in good faith, the IGS assured them that she will ensure that the necessary recourse is given to BoG as the regulator of banks in any future directive of this nature.

The bank also advised the IGS to implement the law and collaborate with the Registrar General's Department (RGD). In response, the IGS indicated that there is already a collaboration mechanism in place. The BoG officials offered to accompany NaSIA on any stakeholder engagement to educate schools on the need to acquire a license from NaSIA before opening bank accounts.

Conclusion

It is worth noting that NaSIA's stakeholder engagements in the Greater Accra region set the pace for various engagements in other regions. Without doubt, it led to a tweaking of the whole engagement structure. This paved the way for the necessary incorporation of practical realities and emerging stakeholder concerns.

