

TEACHERS' DAY 2014
BNTU NATIONAL PRESIDENT ADDRESS

My brothers and sisters of the Belize National Teachers' Union, as well as all teachers of Belize and workers in Education, on behalf of the Great – BNTU I wish you a Happy Teachers' Day 2014.

We are now set to engage in the final activity of the two weeks in which we showcase Education in Belize, Friday, May 16, is National Teachers' Day, a day designed for our country to celebrate its teachers. A day which we at BNTU believe our teachers are most deserving of.

Yes, Teachers' Day 2014 should have been celebrated at the National Level; however in a letter addressed to the BNTU, the Senior Management of the Ministry of Education stated that they have taken the decision to celebrate Teachers' Day at the District level. Their reason, "that the BNTU was unable to contribute to meet the cost of 1/3 of the budget, some \$35,000.00."

We must make it absolutely clear and dispel the notion alluded to by the Minister of Education that our Union is spiting the Ministry of Education by stating that we were forthright in our letter to the Chair of the "Education Showcase Committee," Mrs. Carol Babb, that as a result of the activities that our Union has been engaged during these recent months, we were only able to contribute the sum of \$10,000.00.

Brothers and Sisters, Fellow teachers, we are not going to allow our Union to be used as a scapegoat by the Senior Management of the Ministry nor the Minister of Education, for not celebrating Teachers' Day 2014 at the National Level.

On the other hand we seek answers to the following:

- a) If we are talking of partnering as Stakeholders who would have financed the other 2/3 of the budget?
- b) The Senior Managers having known three years ago, that Teachers' Day 2014 would have been held at the National Level; How much was budgeted to celebrate Teachers' Day?
- c) Why was no consideration given to reduce the budgeted amount that was suggested by the chair?

When answers to the above have been had then you be the Judge.

It is said that behind every dark cloud there is a silver lining, so we will celebrate Teachers' Day 2014 in whatever way we can; our Union spirit and that of our Belizean teachers will not be dampened.

We will continue to do our task as teachers to the best of our ability because we are professionals and Nation Builders.

We will continue and stand ready to play a significant role as a major stakeholder in Education in Belize.

It is our hope that our contribution to Education will be honored and respected, because we do so with the best interest of our country at heart. We call on all stakeholders to do the same as quality Education means better Education for all.

Finally, the Belize National Teachers' Union remains steadfast to its Mission and Vision; BNTU Building Solidarity and Defending Trade Unionism.

Happy Teachers' Day
Happy Teachers' Day
Gindala-hawie arufudahtien
Feliz Día de los maestros

Solidarity Forever, Teachaz gat yuh bak!

Thank You!