



***EDUCATION: “THE GIFT OF A LIFE TIME”.***

**SPEECH MADE BY PROF. PETER M. F. MBITHI, DEPUTY  
VICE-CHANCELLOR (ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE)  
UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI DURING THE KATHIANI  
DISTRICT EDUCATION DAY HELD AT KATHIANI BOYS  
HIGH SCHOOL ON MAY 31, 2013**

**The Chairman District Education Board**

**The District Education Officer**

**Members of the DEB**

**Members of Secondary School BOGs**

**Principals of Secondary Schools**

**Head teachers of Primary Schools**

**Members of KUPPET**

**Members of KNUT**

**Parents and Guardians**

**Teachers**

**Students**

**Distinguished Guests**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

**It gives me great pleasure to be with you here today on the auspicious occasion of this District's prize giving day. This is a day that has been set aside for the District Education Board, Boards of Governors, teachers, parents, guardians and benefactors to recognize and honour those in our schools who have achieved and excelled in various fields.**

**For the teachers and students/pupils in our schools, it is important to note that success and excellence do not come easily. They are not granted for free, neither do they go to the lazy. Success comes to those who are focused and persistent. Your ability to persist in the face**

**of set-backs and disappointments is your measure of your belief in yourself and your ability to succeed. Often, your ability to persist is the greatest asset you have, and is the one quality that separates you from everyone else.**

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

**We are operating in an era of rapid changes especially in technology and new approaches to problem solving issues. A major challenge therefore is management of change, especially among staff in our schools. Though there has always been a way of doing something and it worked, there is also a way of doing the same thing or achieving the same goal that works better or faster.**

**There is therefore need for proper planning and allowing some flexibility in the way towards achieving our goals. Proper mentorship and a shared vision are critical to this process. Success is best achieved when you are clear about the goal but flexible about the process of getting there.**

**While our challenge as leaders and teachers is to adapt to change and new methods of achieving set goals, we need also to ensure that we develop value systems that support this, and are in tandem with societal goals. Such values like teamwork, honesty, respect, accountability and**

**adaptability to change. There is need to inculcate all these among our students.**

**I wish to take this opportunity to appreciate the great role played by our teachers, individually and collectively, in ensuring that this District continues to forge ahead and to deliver on its targets. Teamwork is essential in realization of goals and I wish to thank the officers of the District Education Office for encouraging and sustaining a culture of teamwork in the management of Schools.**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**Kenya's development agenda is hinged on Vision 2030.**

**The Vision is the country's current development blue print covering the period 2008 to 2030. It aims to transform Kenya into a newly industrializing middle income country providing a high quality life to all its citizens by the year 2030.**

**The Vision has three pillars: the economic, the social and the political. The economic pillar aims to improve the prosperity of all Kenyans through an economic development programme covering all the regions of Kenya**

**and aiming to achieve an average Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate of 10% per annum beginning 2012.**

**The social pillar seeks to build a just and cohesive society, with social equity in a clean and secure environment, while the political pillar aims to realize a democratic political system founded on issue-based politics that respect the rule of law, and protect the rights and freedoms of every individual in the Kenyan society. The government is keen to fully implement the goals of Vision 2030.**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**Education and training of all Kenyans is fundamental to the success Vision 2030. Education equips citizens with understanding and knowledge that enables them to make informed choices about their lives and those facing the society.**

**A major challenge in the education sector is that of creating a cohesive society imbued with a culture of hard work and efficiency and one that values transparency and accountability, respect of the rule of law, and is concerned about the environment.**

**According to Vision 2030, the education and training sector will be charged with the responsibility of creating a knowledge based society that upholds justice, democracy, accountability and encourages issue-based and results-oriented political engagements.**

**Greater investment in education will make significant contributions to other sectors like health, water and sanitation, environment and housing. It will also help the country to address gender imbalances, youth related problems, and obstacles facing other vulnerable groups by equipping them with skills that will enable them to live more productive and satisfying lives.**

**Quality is a paramount fact in education and training. To sustain quality, there is need to pursue quality assurance and standard to ensure that:**

- **Relevant curricular as well as teaching and learning materials are developed;**
- **Appropriate physical facilities and equipment are provided;**
- **There is adequate number of qualified teaching staff for efficient delivery of the curriculum.**

**Currently, government expenditure on education is equivalent to 7.0% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which is one of the highest expenditure levels per student out of the education GDP in Africa. This is a reflection of the seriousness with which the government regards the education and training sector. It is therefore incumbent upon all of us to ensure we take full advantage of the opportunities and funding provided by the government, as we all join hands in working towards the education and training goals of Vision 2030.**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**It is important to realize that all worthwhile achievements have to do with hard work. Even those receiving prizes today must have worked hard. For students, you need to appreciate that there is nothing that will bring you to the attention of your superiors faster than your developing a reputation of being a hard worker. People who are in a position to help you advance in your studies, even in your career, will always be impressed by your willingness to work harder and longer than anyone else.**

**All great success is preceded by a long period of hard work in a single direction towards a clearly defined purpose. But it is not enough to just work hard, or work long hours. You must be working on high value tasks and activities towards the accomplishment of meaningful and important goals. You must therefore work “smart”.**

**Like all other areas in Kenya, this District has its own operational challenges, but in spite of the challenges, the District has managed to raise its KCSE mean score from 4.02 in 2009 to 4.54 in 2012. The District has also managed to raise the KCPE mean score from 238.45 in**

**2009 to 244.74 in 2012. We must aspire for even better scores in 2013.**

**I am aware that the District also has to address these other challenges**

- **Infrastructure development**
- **Child labour**
- **Staffing**
- **Logistical support e.g. transport for essential functions**
- **Increasing student enrolment**
- **Parents' potential to pay fees on time.**
- **Commitment of teachers, parents, guardians and students.**

**Though these challenges are real, they are by no means unique to this district. If you travel around, you will find other districts experiencing bigger challenges, and some perform better than Kathiani. It is our commitment to address these challenges that is of utmost importance – it is not enough to point to the challenges, we must, as a team, devise ways of overcoming them. Ultimately, the buck stops with us as the “owners” of the district, whether DEB officers, principals, teachers or parents. All have a duty to provide resources and move the students to achieve good results.**

**As for the students, let me remind you that your rewards in life will be in direct proportion to the value of your service to others. We make our living and add meaning to our lives by serving other people in some way. We are all dependent upon other people for the food we eat, the clothes we wear, the homes we live in and the various elements that make our lives enjoyable and worthwhile.**

**Our primary job as members of society is to find the best way to incorporate ourselves into the fabric of society by serving as many others as well as we possibly can.**

**My challenge to the students is to urge them to work hard in their academic work, at the same time also aspire to be responsible members of society. Be the pride of your parents, your school, your district and your community. Your parents and teachers and community have given you Education – The gift of a life time.**

**Thank you very much and may *God Bless You All.***