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NEWS

\$1.5-MILLION BREAKFAST PROGRAMME LAUNCHED IN INNER-CITY SCHOOL

Thursday, March 19, 2009

APPROXIMATELY 600 students at the St Anne's Primary School in West Kingston will stand to benefit from a \$1.5-million breakfast feeding programme that was launched on the school grounds Tuesday.

The programme, which will run for two years, is expected to improve the nutritional intake of the children and help them become more alert in class. It was sponsored by the Rotary clubs of Kingston and Oxford, Michigan.



Rotarian Effiom Whyte (left) and Beresford Clarke from the Jamaica Youth Education Support Group, unveil the scroll to mark the launch of the St Anne's Primary School breakfast feeding programme. Looking on is Mayor of Kingston Desmond McKenzie (right) and the school's headboy and head girl, Jamal Mcleod and Kimone Kilburn. (Photo: Bryan Cummings)

Principal for the institution, Estella Forrester, said a school breakfast feeding programme was one of the most pressing needs for the school.

"This kind of intervention makes school a pleasant place to be, both for students and teachers. Hungry kids are certainly aggressive children and uncommitted learners, and so it makes no sense to have children who are hungry in front of the teachers," she said.

Forrester noted that most of the children were from less affluent households. She also cited various studies which show that hungry children would be more likely to have behavioural and learning problems.

"Our community will be made rich with promise and hope because of this intervention," she said.

Meanwhile, Mayor of Kingston Desmond McKenzie, while lauding the efforts of the stakeholders, reminded parents and caregivers to show more interest in their children.

"A lot of parents spend more on a hairdo or an outfit to go to dance more than how they spend on sending their children to school. And it is a known fact that many children come to school hungry while their parents are out having a good time," he said.

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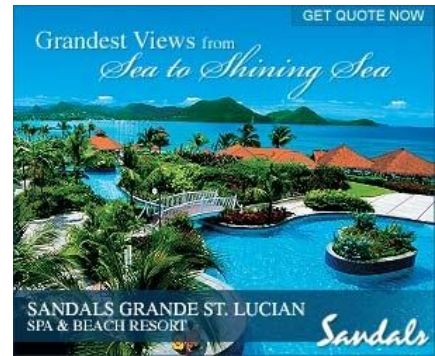
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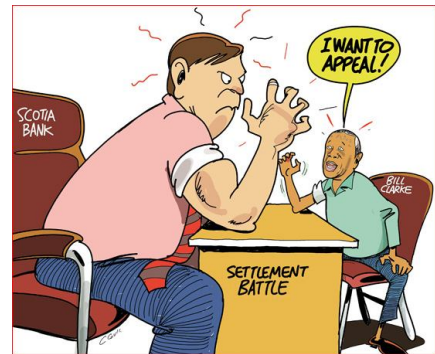
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- Good decision
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He said the Rotary club had touched the vital part of learning.

"They say empty bags can't stand and there are times when you look in the faces of many of our young children, you can see that all they need is a good bowl of cornmeal porridge and some crackers to get going," he said.



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