

**Japanese Government boosts Jamaica's Education Sector with an additional \$31 million Grant Funding for New Classrooms and rehabilitation works at Fair Prospect Primary school and Black River High school.**

Jamaica's education system is benefiting from the goodwill and benevolence of the Japanese government over the years noted Mrs. Julie Bailey-Walters, Principal of Fair Prospect Primary School. Appreciation was expressed on behalf of the school community for the priceless gift of two new concrete classrooms replacing termite infested ply board structure as well as the rehabilitation of windows in a number of other existing classrooms at the institution noted Mrs. Bailey-Walters during the grant contract signing ceremony with the Embassy of Japan held at the Ministry of Education Youth & Information headquarters in Kingston on Friday March 9, 2017.

The Principal also noted that the school became aware that it could access the Grant Assistance for Grassroots and Human Security Projects after a Government of Japan's Overseas Cooperation Volunteer, Mr. Yutaro Furuta who is assigned to the Ministry of Education Region 2 office as a Mathematics Teacher visited the school and also saw the dire need for better classroom infrastructure. He also assisted the school with the preparation of required documentation.

Acting Principal of the Black River High School, Mr. Theobald Fearon conveyed deep appreciation to the Government of Japan for the act of generosity which will help to alleviate significant challenges ranging from overcrowding, poor building infrastructure and flood prone facilities that both institutions are facing.

Education Minister, Senator Ruel Reid noted that it was another pleasant occasion to attend this double Grant Contract Signing Ceremony. He expressed thanks to the Japanese Government and the Embassy of Japan in Jamaica for interest in Jamaica's education. Notwithstanding the myriad of challenges especially being faced many schools that are in major disrepair, inroads have been made in terms of progress during last year wherein the Government of Jamaica spent approximately 574 million dollars in 172 schools noted Minister Reid. All

children need to be in school and therefore should be encouraged to perform well in order to build a better Jamaica especially for the youth. The quality of education should move from poverty to prosperity quipped Minister Reid.

Jamaica has the great potential for advancing its further economic and social development as a progressive nation said Ambassador Yamazaki. Likewise, the Government of Japan will continue to cooperate with the people and Government of Jamaica to meet its development targets through the Official Development Assistance which includes grant and loan project, technical cooperation programme and Japan International Cooperation Volunteers who are playing an integral role in the strengthening of Jamaica's Education system. To further strengthen the Japan-Jamaica Partnership two more grant contracts valued at Thirty one (31) million dollars were then signed by Ambassador Yamazaki bringing the total number of projects signed to seven (7) worth over sixty-six (66) million dollars since his tour of duty to Jamaica began in October 2017.

Also in attendance were the Hon. Floyd Green, State Minister in the MOEYI and MP of South West St. Elizabeth, Mr. Vincent Guthrie, Chairman, Black River High School, Mr. Aubrey Mason, Chairman, Fair Prospect Primary School, Mrs. Ann-Marie Vaz, Director of One Jamaica Foundation & Chairman of National Education Trust (NET), Ms. Latoya Harris, Director Donor & Partnership Management, National Education Trust (NET) Ms. Marcia Phillips Dawkins, Managing Director of National Education Trust (NET), Mr. Kenji Tobita, Resident Representative, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Mr. Y. Furuta, JICA Volunteer assigned to the Ministry of Education's Region 2, students of Fair Prospect Primary School, Dr. Nadine Leachman, Regional Director, Region 5 and other notable attendees.



From left: Mr. Tobita, Resident Representative of JICA Jamaica Office, Ms. Harris, Director Donor & Partnership Management of NET, Mrs. Ann-Marie Vaz, Director of NET, Minister Green, Ambassador Yamazaki, Minister Reid, Mrs. Bailey-Walters, Mr. Furuta a JOCV volunteer teaching math at the school and Fair Prospect Primary's students.



From left: Ms. Harris, Mrs. Vaz, Minister Green, Ambassador, Mr. Fearon, Minister Reid and Mr. Guthrie.



Ambassador, Chairman of Black River High School Mr. Guthrie and Minister Reid signed the Grant Contract.



Ambassador and Minister Reid exchanged the Grant Contract for Fair Prospect Primary School.



Keynote address from Minister Reid



Opening remarks from Principal of Black River High School, Mr. Fearon





Remarks from Ambassador Yamazaki



Vote of thanks from Principal of Fair Prospect Primary School, Mrs. Bailey-Walters



The students of Fair Prospect Primary School presented the poem.