

JNBS Foundation steps up literacy drive

EIGHT RURAL primary schools received computer-based resources and other tools to improve the literacy and numeracy competencies of their students.

The tools were disbursed to the schools recently by the Jamaica Partnership for Education (JPE), an initiative of the Jamaica National Building Society (JNBS) Foundation, which was established in 2009 to raise funds for the eradication of illiteracy in Jamaican schools by 2015.

The project team handed over a combination of Mobile Enrichment Carts from the Ministry of Education's Enrichment initiative, and the interactive Autoskills Software, to representatives of the schools, as part of an activity-filled event, at the Osborne Store Primary and Junior High School in Clarendon.

The schools selected to receive the carts are: Chester Castle All Age School, Hanover; Troja and Harewood Primary Schools in St. Catherine; Mearnsville All Age and Strawberry Primary and Junior High School, Westmoreland; Albion and Glendevon Primary and Junior High Schools in St. James and Osborne Store Primary and Junior High School in Clarendon.

Anna Toby, project manager of the JPE, said the Mobile Enrichment Cart

and the Autoskills Software tools stimulate students' natural curiosity by making the classroom and learning experience fun. "Moreover, it helps teachers identify those students who may experience specific learning difficulties, to allow for further intervention," she said.

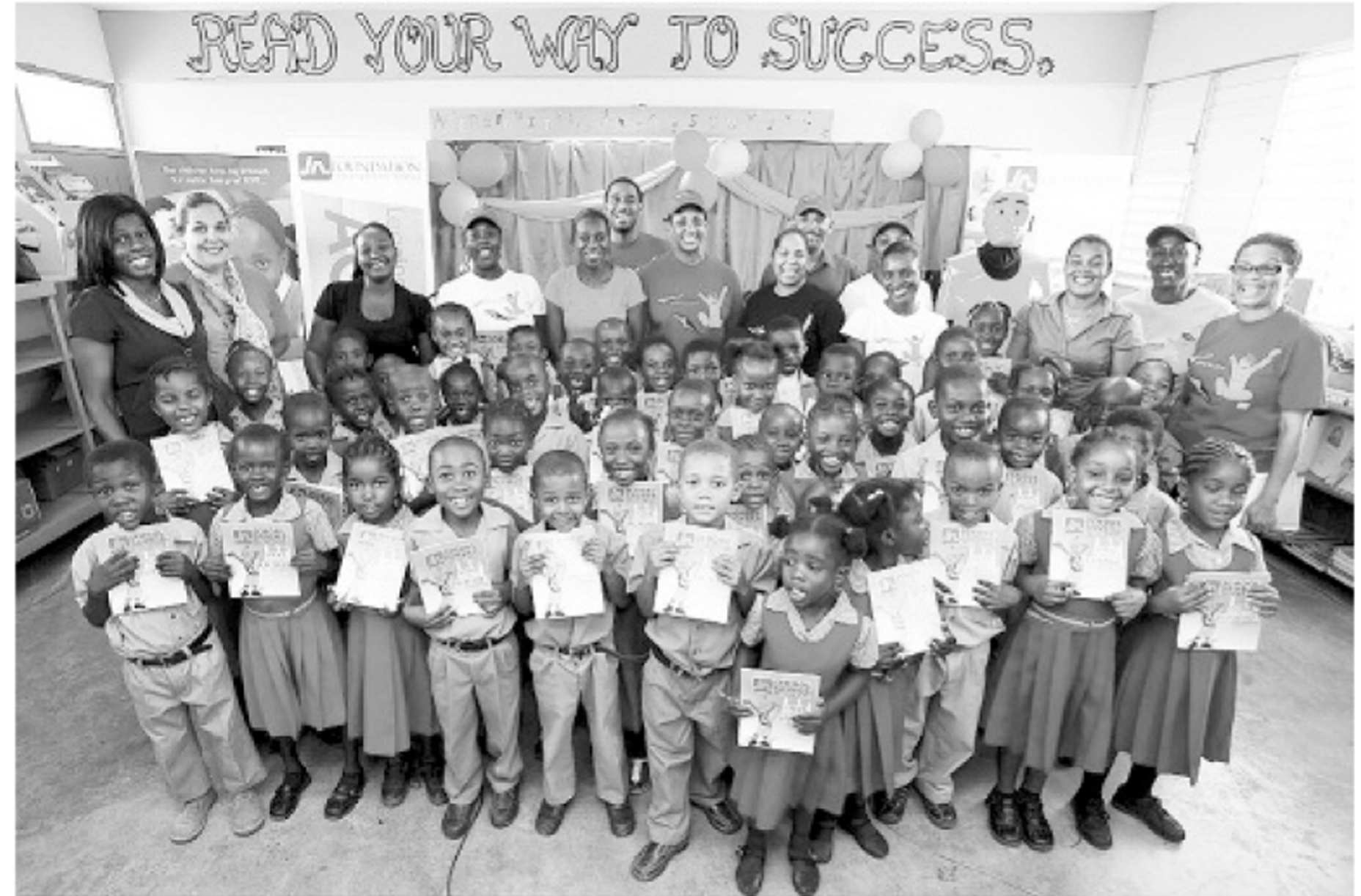
TEACHING METHODOLOGIES

Similarly, the Autoskills Software, which will be outfitted on existing computers at the schools, contains diagnostic, prescriptive and progress tracking capabilities. "Teachers will be able to systematically manage and tailor teaching methodologies in line with the performance of individual students," she added.

Introduced in Jamaica in 2008, through a partnership between the JNBS Foundation and the Violence Prevention Alliance (VPA), Autoskills has garnered high success rates in developing the numeracy and literacy competencies of at-risk youth across the VPA network.

Commenting on the richness and versatility of the tools, Toby said, "The Mobile Enrichment carts are also expected to boost the outcomes of students who are, on the other hand, performing at levels above their peers, by allowing access to accelerated instruction that will maximise their learning potential."

Since last year, the JPE has focused on providing products and programmes aimed at building the capacity of rural primary schools to



Grade one students at the Osborne Store Primary and Junior High School in Clarendon, pose with teachers and representatives from the JNBS Foundation; JN Money Services Limited; NEM Insurance Company Limited and the Jamaica Automobile Association following a day of activities at the school recently.

increase literacy and numeracy levels. It is implemented in partnership with JN Money Services Ltd. and NEM Insurance Company Ltd, which provide financial support and encourage donations to the initiative from their clients in Jamaica and in the Diaspora markets.

Commenting on the partnership with the JPE, Gabriel Heron, marketing and business development manager at JN Money Services Limited said the funds would enrich the

teaching and learning process at each school.

"We are proud to partner with the JPE in its efforts to develop our schools; and congratulate the JNBS Foundation for leading the initiative. The Foundation has been successful in its drive for "Action", in supporting the Education Transformation Process; and creating a direct channel for Jamaicans in the Diaspora to play a greater role in national development," he remarked.