

# 65,000 advised to repeat P.7 after missing S.1 slots

The two-day selection, which ended on Friday, drew close to 2,000 secondary schools.

BY KARIM MUYOBO & JACINTA MARIA KANNYANGE

The government has advised at least 65,720 candidates who sat the 2025 Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) to repeat Primary Seven after missing out on placement into Senior One during the just-concluded national selection exercise.

The two-day selection, which ended on Friday at UMA Hall in Lugogo, drew close to 2,000 secondary schools that gathered to pick learners for the 2026 Senior One intake.

Officials at the Ministry of Education and Sports said 722,720 candidates passed the 2025 PLE, representing 91 percent of the total who sat the examinations. Of these, at least 657,000 are expected to transition to Senior One in government and private secondary schools across the country.

Ms Frances Atima, the head of the Directorate of Education Standards and chairperson of the Senior One Placement Committee, said more than 3,200 private secondary schools will absorb an estimated 384,000 learners during the main exercise and subsequent admissions.

"In total, we expect at least 657,000 Primary Seven leavers out of the 722,720 candidates who passed PLE to join Senior One," Ms Atima said.

She added that the remaining nine percent have been guided to explore alternative pathways, including repeating Primary Seven to improve their grades.

"Those who did not pass have also been advised by the minister to consider repeating Primary Seven," she said.

At least 273,000 learners were admitted



School administrators participate in the Senior One selection exercise at UMA Hall in Lugogo, Kampala, last Thursday. PHOTO/ GEOFFREY MUTUMBA

to 1,521 government secondary schools under both the Universal Secondary Education (USE) and non-USE programmes.

Addressing school administrators at the close of the exercise, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education and Sports, Dr Kedrace Turgyagya, urged head teachers to ensure transparency and fairness in handling complaints from parents and candidates who may be dissatisfied with the outcomes.

"We know you must have observed fairness in your selection, depending on merit and also on the choices made by young people and their families. However, some parents and learners may not be satisfied with what you have done over these two days," Dr Turgyagya said.

Dr Turgyagya also reminded schools to be mindful of special categories of learners who may require ad-

ditional consideration, including children with disabilities and those who may not have excelled in written examinations but face unique circumstances. She further called on schools to prepare for learners from multicul-

tural and international backgrounds, including refugees and children of diplomats recently posted to Uganda.

The Minister of State for Primary Education, Ms Joyce Kaducu Moriku, who represented First Lady and Education Minister Janet Museveni, described the Senior One selection as a critical milestone in learners' academic journeys.

"The Senior One selection exercise is not merely an administrative procedure; it is a gateway of opportunity. It represents hope for learners, confidence for parents, and responsibility for institutions," she said.

She emphasised the need to uphold government policies on access and equity, urging schools to give due consideration to vulnerable and disadvantaged learners while maintaining regional balance and merit.

The first term for Senior One 2026 is scheduled to begin on March 2, 2026.

## THE KEY NUMBERS

- 722,720 passed the 2025 PLE.
- 657,000 expected to join Senior One in 2026.
- 65,720 advised to repeat Primary Seven.
- 273,000 admitted to 1,521 government schools.
- 384,000 projected to join over 3,200 private schools.