

Withheld results victims stranded

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MBALE. Students of Mbale Comprehensive School and Magale Royal integrated SS in Mbale District, whose Senior Six results were withheld by the Uganda National Examinations Board (Uneb) over suspected malpractice, are stranded and short of answers for their parents.

A student of Mbale Comprehensive School, who declined to disclose his identity, said their future is uncertain. "I can't speak to my father now, he is very angry with me, he has refused to speak to me, he is disappointed with me for wasting his money on my fees, he is calling me a cheat, and has vowed never to pay for me any fees for my A-Level studies," the disconsolate former student said.

Students cry out

At Magale Royal integrated SS, another affected school, a former student, Mr Aloysius Tsawa, says he does not know what to tell his parents. "What do I tell my father who has sold ev-

erything to pay for my fees for A-Level? What do we do? Some of us never cheated and the school should give us an explanation," said sobbing Mr Tsawa.

Mr Bernard Osenda, the director of Mbale comprehensive School, said the school administration will seek an explanation from Uneb why results for 89 students were withheld.

"Our school has been performing well all the time. My schools can't engage in malpractices," Mr Osenda said on Friday. Efforts to reach the teachers of the schools for their views about the matter were futile as their phones were off.

The Mbale District education officer, Mr Mike Nangosha, blamed examination malpractice on commercialisation by schools that are desperate for good results in order to impress parents and grow enrolment.

"I am not surprised that many schools are still involved in exam malpractices because the directors of schools want good results and the students also fear exams and want to cheat in order to pass," said Mr Nan-

gosha.

Uneb said it will summon students and school heads whose results were withheld to explain themselves. Others to be summoned are the invigilators and scouts that were hired to oversee the entire examinations process in the affected schools.

Uneb spokesperson Hamis Kaheru said yesterday that investigations have started and that schools that will be found guilty could lose their centres.

The way forward

"We have withheld results from schools where malpractices seem to have taken place, we have started investigations and the schools that will be found guilty will have their Uneb centres suspended or cancelled forever depending on the magnitude of the malpractice," said Mr Kaheru yesterday.

He said all parties will be given a fair hearing, and that after they have defended themselves, the committee can decide to release the results if students are found innocent but if found guilty of cheating exams, their exams will be cancelled.