

School dropout rate worries district education leaders

MBARARA

By Abdulkarim Ssengendo

The school dropout rate in Mbarara schools has reached alarming levels. This was revealed by the district education officer, Gabriel Ahimbisibwe, who said the high rate is reported in both private and government schools.

Ahimbisibwe said out of 30,000 pupils who enrol for Primary One, less than 5,000 complete Primary Seven. He said this is common across the district.

He made the comments while addressing teachers, headteachers and school management committees from government-aided schools who turned up for a one-day meeting at Bwizibwera Church of Uganda. The meeting was organised by Kashari South MP Nathan Itungo to iron out the challenges affecting performance in government schools.

Ahimbisibwe was worried that although the Government has tried to promote education through different programmes, hundreds of children are increasingly dropping out of schools, especially at lower levels.

He said about 187 candidates who registered for Primary Leaving Examinations last year but did not sit for the exams. He said the number might double this



Ahimbisibwe talking to teachers during a meeting at Bwizibwera Church. Photo by Abdulkarim Ssengendo

if no measures are put in place.

Julius Mwebaze of Rwentanga Primary School blamed parents for abandoning their responsibility of providing requirements for their children to remain in school.

Ahimbisibwe said in Rubaya sub-county, during the dry season, parents keep children at home to look after their animals. He said in some parts such as Mwizi, some parents null their

girls out of school in favour of early marriages for monetary purposes.

Mwebaze Kabunduguza, a parent, called on sub-county enforcement officers to arrest parents neglecting their children. He also urged the Government to ban cheap waragi sold in trading centres. Lack of follow-up by local leaders on teachers who defile children was listed among the challenges affecting

performance in school. Teachers said there is connivance between parents and defilers is also another challenge the district is facing.

Itungo, blamed headteachers for not reporting all these challenges including misbehaving teachers. "We need the support of the local councils; law enforcers such as the Police to curb the worrying child labour in the district," Itungo said.

NEWS GO

Senior One entrants warned again

The acting district commander of Charles Oumo, has warned Senior One entrants not to engage in strikes and demonstrations at schools they have enrolled in. While flagging off the entrants who got a bursary of Kaberamaido C of I Isala Eragu, Oumo said they should take their second home in school.

Kigezi coll- mark 60 y

Kigezi College will mark 60 years this Saturday. Museveni is expected to be the guest of honor at one of eight schools that were built by the government in the region who would expect to see the leadership positions.