

Schools defy govt, increase fees

Warning. Government says it sent a directive stopping schools from increasing fees early, warning that action will be taken against those who violate it.

BY MONITOR TEAM
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KAMPALA. The Education minister, Ms Janet Museveni, has asked parents to report schools which could have increased fees and are demanding scholastic materials despite government's directive to stop the practice until further notice.

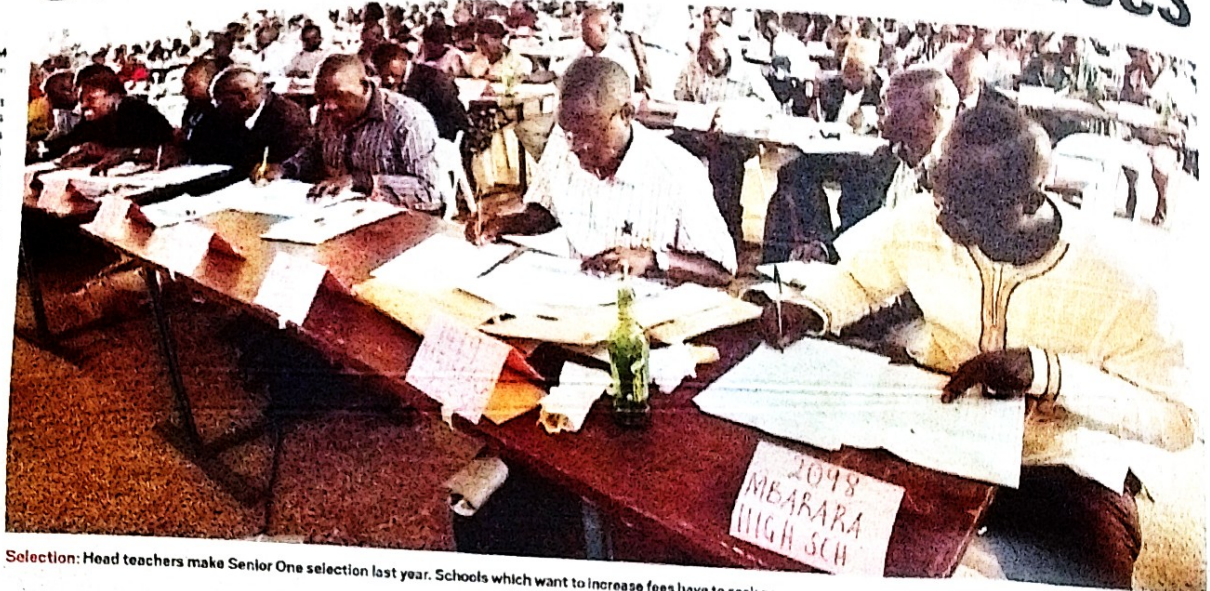
"This will work if parents take it up. If they can withdraw their children from these schools which have increased fees or report them to the ministry. As a ministry, we cannot know if parents continue to hold hands with schools increasing fees," Ms Museveni told a press conference after releasing the 2017 Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) results in Kampala last week.

Mr Aggrey Kibenge, the ministry's Undersecretary, said the directive stopping schools from increasing fees was sent early enough before they closed for end of year and warned that no school authorities should give any excuse when the new academic year opens on February 5.

"We issued the circular prohibiting schools from asking for requirements and increasing fees this year in good time. All relevant authorities will be deployed at the start of the term and measures will be taken case by case. Non-cash items are strictly prohibited. All these must be taken care of in the fee structure," Mr Kibenge said.

He said inspectors will be expected to move around schools and submit periodic reports to the districts for primary schools while secondary ones will submit reports to the ministry for action against officers who will violate the directive.

For any school administrator who wishes to increase from last year's fees structure or even ask for items like textbooks, toilet paper, books, cement, reams of paper, paint, they should first seek permission from the permanent secretary, Mr Alex



Selection: Head teachers make Senior One selection last year. Schools which want to increase fees have to seek government permission first. PHOTO BY STEPHEN M. MUKASA

Kakooza.

However, it has emerged that while the majority of schools claim they have not increased the fees, they have incorporated the items they have been demanding from parents into monetary value and added it on the tuition.

For instance, Makerere College School administration yesterday indicated that their parents had agreed to include the requirements in monetary form instead of bringing the items.

The administrator, who declined to be named in order to speak freely, also said the fees had been maintained at Shs1m but this was likely to go up when the money for requirements is added on. Day scholars at the school will have to part with Shs650,000.

"Our students have been bringing to the school things like reams of

HEAD TEACHERS SPEAK OUT

"We have shied away from increasing fees because there is poverty. There was a long dry season and crop yields were poor," Ms Oliva Nambi, the Busoga High School, Kamuli, head teacher said.

"There is no increase in fees except for a few school requirements under PTA arrangement. The problem is we

are dealing with peasant parents who we are wooing to value and support education. So a slight increase may force the students to drop out and be forced to marry, especially for girls. Even the payment of the little charges are not forthcoming, so sometimes we rely on mobilising outside support from leaders and donors to supplement school

care of uniform, library, laboratory contribution, papers, and identity cards charges, but this will drop to Shs474,000 in the subsequent terms according to the head teacher, Mr Wilson Byamukama.

King's College Buddo head teacher Patrick Male Bakka has told some parents that accessing Senior One might require up to Shs1.5 million to cater for school fees and other requirements.

However, candidates that will join the school on special arrangement have to first pay Shs200,000 before they are served admission letters. However, the authorities at St

Mary's College Kitende declined to reveal their fees structure, saying parents interested in taking their children to the school should physically visit to be briefed about the fees structure.

resources," Mr Samuel Wotakyala of St Andrews SS Naminaga, Kamuli, said.

"We are subsidising the fees because of USE grant, but we are now at a crossroads as government is phasing it out in private schools," Mr Charles Ngobi of Kamuli Progressive College, said.

Reported by Emmanuel Anebyoona, Damali Mukhaya, Robert Muhirwa, Felix Warom Okello, Seovin Iceta, Fred Wabende, Denis Edema, Rajab Mukombozi, Cissy Makumbi, Fednand Tuhame, Patience Ahimbibwe, David Mafabi, Oplo Sam Caleb, Ronald Seabe, Al-mahadi Saenkabirwa, Fred Muzanzo & Malik Fahad Jingo.

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ENTRY FEES FOR SENIOR ONE

Schools	Fees (Boarding)	Fees (Day)
Mt St Mary's Namugunga	Shs1.2m (with requirements)	
St. Henry's College, Kitovu	Shs1m (with requirements)	
Mengo SS	Shs890,000	
Nyakasura School	Shs977,000 (boys), Shs741,000 (girls)	
Makerere College	Shs1,035m	Shs650,000
Ntare School	Shs940,000	
Nabumali High School	Shs850,000 (with uniform)	
Mbarara High School	Shs1.1m (with requirements)	
Kennedy SS, Kakuku	Shs1.3 (with requirements)	
Kinaawa High School, Kawempe Campus	Shs700,000 (with requirements)	Shs450,000 (with requirements)
St Kizito SS, Namugunga	Shs1.01m (with requirements)	