

Seninde blames new schools for falling standards

JINJA

By Doreen Musingo

The mushrooming private and government-aided schools involved in purchasing examinations and lesson plans from printing bureaus are causing poor education standards, the education state minister, Rosemary Seninde, has warned.

She said these schools recruit unqualified teachers and end up buying teaching materials which are not sufficient, hence making pupils fail.

Seninde made the remarks during a dialogue of district education officers (DEOs), district inspectors of schools and municipal inspectors of

schools held at Jinja College last week. The dialogue was aimed at improving Universal Primary Education and Universal Secondary Education.

She said while some schools have acquainted themselves with the curriculum, others are still lagging behind.

She warned that next year all schools that will not have proper requirements, qualified teachers, classrooms and dormitories will be closed.

The dialogue was also aimed at finding measures to reduce absenteeism of pupils and teachers.

Seninde blamed the education officials for failing to monitor school programmes, saying this partly contributed to the increased absenteeism



among pupils and teachers.

She attributed the poor performance in schools to politicians who influence district service commissions to recruit unqualified persons.

Seninde said the ministry directed districts to use some of the funds for the special facilitation grant to buy vehicles for officials to effectively

“Politicians influence district service commissions to recruit unqualified persons.” Seninde

monitor and supervise school. However, officials do not utilise the vehicles because politicians seized them for personal interests.

She urged parents to closely monitor schools citing Fort Portal and Mbarara where performance has improved because of parents involvement.

Seninde said registration of pupils aged 5-16 years was completed in the north, West Nile, Kampala and some parts of the central region.

Irene Tumwa, who is in charge of ICT Busoga region at the National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA), said they had finished training staff and had received machines which will soon be used in the remaining districts of Jinja, Luwero, Hoima and Mbale.

Daniel Nkaada, the commissioner for basic education, urged the officials to ensure teachers examine pupils on the basics they have taught.

Nkaada said most of the schools that buy exams and

lesson plans are in hard-to-reach areas, while others in areas that have been affected by insurgencies.

“We all learn differently, while some schools have covered most topics with reference materials and are in a suitable environment, others are affected, which makes learning hard,” he said.

Nkaada urged the officials to make continuous assessment of teachers, while teachers make personal assessment for better results.

Musa Birungi, a senior education officer from the ministry, warned that before licensing of private schools, teachers will be required to provide academic testimony to ensure quality.