

SCHOOLS GIVEN ONE WEEK DEADLINE FOR LICENCES

By Martin Kitubi

As the third term comes to an end, private schools have up to next week to upload the school and students' data onto the Education Management Information (EMIS), or lose either the school licence or registration certificate.

The deadline elapses on December 6, next month. Relatedly, government schools have the same period to update their data on EMIS or miss out capitation grants for next term.

The directive is enshrined in a circular to all schools and local governments issued by the education ministry.

According to the ministry, private schools are required to go to the education officers at districts, municipalities and cities to validate their EMIS data without fail, to support the upcoming verification of licenses and registration certificates.

Under the current school management, private schools are allowed to operate temporarily with a licence as they fulfil other obligations before they are issued with registration certificates. A licence lasts about two years while the certificate expires after five years.

A school without a registration certificate is not allocated an examination centre number by the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEBC).

In one of the circulars issued by the ministry, the uploaded data is urgently needed to plan for the sector better.

"Urgently complete EMIS data validation for schools in your local government. All government-aided schools should be updated before capitation cut-off deadline. All private schools must have District Education Officers (DEOs)/Municipal Education Officers/Chief executive officers validate their EMIS data (without fail) to support the upcoming verification of license/registration certificates," the letter addressed to school administrators reads.

About 20,000 private schools have not uploaded their data onto the system and they risk missing out on the licenses and registration certificates.

Relatedly, the *New Vision* has learnt that about 30 local



Mugimba

SCHOOL CALENDAR

The education ministry has released the 2026 school calendar ahead of time for schools to plan better during the festive season and the election year. Children in pre-primary, primary and secondary schools, will report for First Term on February 2, 2026. The term will run for 89 days and it will be concluded on Friday May 1, 2026. The education ministry has banned all schools, including boarding sections, from teaching during designated holidays without the written permission of the permanent secretary.

In addition, school will start at 8:00am and end at 4:30pm for primary and secondary schools, and from 8:00am to 12:00pm for pre-primary schools. In the ministry circular dated November 24, 2025, the Permanent Secretary, Dr Kedrace Turyagyenda, warned that non-adherence to this calendar will attract disciplinary action against the implicated head of school. "School open-days, visitation days and other annual functions during the school term should be set by individual schools and institutions, in consultation with the management of neighbouring schools/institutions to avoid clashes and congestion," Turyagyenda said in the circular. "Management of these functions should adhere to the guidelines for safe conduct of entertainment and co-curricular activities and election of student leaders in pre-primary, primary and post-primary schools and institutions. Schools and institutions should sensitise parents and other stakeholders about the school calendar."

governments have not sent to the ministry validated numbers of learners in the respective government schools.

NUMBERS ON EMIS

Data from the education ministry shows that there are 52,740 primary and secondary schools, with over 12.8 million learners whose data has been uploaded online.

Of the total, 11.1 million are primary school pupils while 1.7 million others are secondary school students.

Although there are more private schools (32,653) than public ones (12,550) at primary school level, majority of the pupils (9,412,869) are in government schools.

At secondary level, 6,121 private and 1,416 public schools have uploaded students' data onto EMIS.

Of the total 1.7 million learners enrolled at secondary schools, 1.178 million are in government schools, while 530,783 are in private schools.

Of those enrolled in

government schools, the majority are enrolled at 1,408 Universal Secondary Schools (USE) while others are at the 99-government aided, but non-Universal Secondary Education schools.

WHY THE NEW EMIS

The system is not new, but it was upgraded recently by government to, among other things, have details of learners attached to each academic institution. The upgraded system was piloted in April 2022, with over 500 public and private schools participating.

After passing the test and verified as efficient, it was officially rolled out in July 2022. The data on students will help government know the number of students in all education institutions and those benefiting from the capitation grant.

The system is also intended to enable government to establish the state of infrastructure of both private and public schools.

In the long run, it will improve the inspection department of the ministry where timely updates will be given about a particular school.

S1, S5 SELECTION REPORTING

According to the ministry calendar, the selection and placement exercise for Senior One is expected to take place between January 29-30, 2026, while that of Senior Five, will take place between February 12, to 13, 2026. S1 students will report for first term on February 16, 2026 while Senior Five will report on February 23, 2026.

Dr Dennis Mugimba, the ministry spokesperson, told *New Vision* that the calendar has been released on time to facilitate preparations for next year.

WHAT SECTOR PLAYERS SAY

On the licensing through EMIS, the school managers, especially private proprietors, asked government that they should not use the system to track schools.

Hasadu Kirabira, the National chairperson of National Private Education Institutions Association revealed that there is fear among private schools that the system will be used to witch-hunt them.

Number of schools validated on EMIS – November 2025

LOCAL GOVERNMENT	SCHOOLS	VALIDATED	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	SCHOOLS	VALIDATED
Moroto Mun.	22	22	Masindi	485	109
Koboko	136	125	Mpigi	1,124	252
Kotido Mun.	26	21	Butaleja	263	58
Amudat	45	36	Karenga	70	15
Ntungamo Mun.	45	36	Soroti	192	41
Gulu	147	113	Bugweri	457	97
Ibando	280	210	Kikuube	513	108
Buhweju	193	131	Rukungiri	607	128
Apac Mun.	81	53	Moyo	150	31
Ibando Mun.	167	107	Hoima	507	104
Moroto	76	44	Serere	366	75
Nabilatuk	33	19	Kakumiro	835	170
Bukedea	282	158	Mubende	780	158
Lamwo	209	116	Masaka City	708	143
Kaabong	104	57	Kalungu	481	96
Mubende Mun.	238	125	Pallisa	360	72
Maracha	164	86	Kazo	436	81
Sheema	284	148	Njeru Mun.	478	88
Omoro	238	123	Alebtong	302	54
Rubanda	294	152	Soroti City	276	48
Bushenyi-Ishaka Mun.	103	53	Kabarole	424	73
Bukwo	132	66	Amuru	321	55
Agago	257	126	Busia Mun.	122	20
Rakai	442	213	Ssembabule	495	79
Kumi Mun.	75	36	Gomba	475	73
Apac	178	82	Jinja	380	58
Pader	270	124	Mbarara City	471	68
Yumbe	323	148	Mukono	2,280	326
Lira	214	97	Butebo	142	20
Lugazi Mun.	390	175	Mityana Mun.	441	62
Luuka	338	151	Bulambuli	209	29
Kisoro	399	175	Nakaseke	836	114
Amolatar	257	111	Kasese	1,295	174
Kitgum	204	88	Jinja City	614	79
Tororo	490	211	Rukiga	249	31
Dokolo	202	85	Butambala	326	39
Kalaki	145	60	Bundibugyo	505	59
Kibaale	487	200	Buliisa	138	16
Kumi	210	85	Tororo Mun.	147	17
Pakwach	151	61	Mukono Mun.	773	87
Luwero	2,027	816	Nakasongola	637	61
Rukungiri Mun.	117	47	Iganga Mun.	164	14
Masindi Mun.	218	87	Kiboga	501	38
Lyantonde	264	104	Kassanda	920	69
Kapelebyong	131	50	Bugiri	780	58
Kotido	42	16	Iganga	747	50
Rwampara	231	87	Kira Mun.	931	62
Kabale Mun.	178	67	Mbale City	509	28
Kwanja	165	62	Wakiso	6,615	339
Mbarara	304	113	Bugiri Mun.	122	6
Kabale	318	118	Makindye-Ssabagabo	1,387	59
Kaliro	374	137	Kasese Mun.	396	15
Arua City	433	157	Mityana	786	29
Mbale	244	87	Kayunga	1,088	29
Kitgum Mun.	184	64	Kyenjoio	1,263	29
Kalangala	98	34	Bududa	243	5
Ngora	195	67	Isingiro	1,221	26
Bunyanyabu	355	121	Mitooma	292	6
Nakapiripirit	77	26	Kyotera	730	13
Lwengo	649	218	Oyam	455	8
Kyegegwa	811	267	Kamuli Mun.	161	2
Koboko Mun.	113	37	Buyende	454	4
Sheema Mun.	198	63	Amuria	245	2
Budaka	227	72	Ntungamo	840	7
Kagadi	1,016	319	Nansana Mun.	2,368	15
Kvankwanzi	665	208	Kampala City	3,769	17
Otuke	119	37	Kole	213	1
Busia	410	127	Mayuge	828	3
Kitagwenda	336	104	Lira City	437	1
Arua	174	53	Kamuli	772	1
Nwoya	218	65	Abim	76	
Namisindwa	279	83	Bushenyi	368	
Adjumani	336	99	Hoima City	395	
Fort Portal City	222	65	Kamwenge	644	
Gulu City	391	113	Kanungu	618	
Terego	237	67	Kapchorwa	106	
Kaberamaido	143	40	Kapchorwa Mun.	101	
Bukomansimbi	283	79	Katakwi	218	
Entebbe Mun.	319	89	Kiryandongo	489	
Sironko	369	103	Kween	181	
Kiruhura	270	74	Madi-Okollo	146	
Napak	117	32	Manafwa	286	
Kisoro Mun.	63	17	Namayingo	305	
Namutumba	485	127	Nebbi	259	
Rubizi	251	64	Nebbi Mun.	82	
Kibuku	292	74	Ntoroko	170	
Masaka	240	57	Obongi	98	
Buvuma	110	26	Ssembabule	29	
Bukwe	589	138	Zombo	306	

"EMIS should only cover the numbers of staff, learners and teachers. The moment you want to start tracking school finances and you put deadlines for registration, you scare people. The exercise should be handled in consultation with the players," he said.

On the deadline to apply for licences and registration, Kirabira accused DEOs of frustrating private schools during the process to secure documentation. "Some DEOs

have become a problem. They ask for a lot of money during the registration process. We ask the education ministry to reign over them," he said.

"That is not all. Even uploading the data on the system is tiresome. You have to enter every child's data every term. This means you will need more manpower to carry out the exercise. We now ask government not to implement the deadline before these challenges are addressed."