

Schools must prioritise extracurricular activities

Several schools countrywide overemphasise academics at the expense of extracurricular activities such as sports, music, dance and drama.

Extracurricular activities are important because they play a crucial role in the holistic development of learners, enabling them to acquire skills that academics, alone, cannot teach them.

However, several schools do not accord learners enough time to engage in extracurricular activities, with many misguided teachers and school administrators thinking that time spent doing these activities would best be used for academics-related engagements.

Some schools are so academic-oriented that they do not even have sports grounds. They pile learners with academic work with little time to rest and this leads to stress that compels some learners to drop out of school.

It is unfortunate that these misguided school administrators are supported by some parents who put so much emphasis on high academic grades and view extracurricular activities as a waste of time.

This is wrong because there is so much learners can achieve from regular participation in extracurricular activities.

Activities such as sports and dancing provide learners with physical exercises that burn excess calories and keep them healthy, fit, preventing diseases and health complications caused by sedentary lifestyles such as hypertension, obesity and diabetes.

Sports activities teach learners about team work, fosters discipline, resilience and helps reduce stress from participating in highly competitive academic undertaking.

Activities such as music, dance and drama enable learners to embrace and appreciate their cultures.

They also enable pupils and students to learn about and respect other people's cultures, thereby fostering tolerance and peaceful coexistence.

Through engaging in extracurricular activities, learners are able to acquire skills that enable them to build careers in sports and entertainment industry among others.

Several of the celebrated sports personalities and renowned musicians and actors were nurtured in schools and or institutions that enabled their talents to blossom.

The sports and entertainment industries employ thousands of people countrywide and world over, enabling them to earn a decent living.

We, therefore, call upon the authorities to compel all schools to integrate extracurricular activities in their learning programmes.

All schools should be compelled to establish playgrounds where learners can engage in various sports disciplines.

The authorities must also ensure learners are allowed to participate in music, dance and drama because these activities mould them into well-rounded individuals.

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