

■ EDITORIAL

Teachers showing up will cause excellence

The Government says it is going to tie teachers' salaries directly to attendance. The new innovation promises to transform Uganda's education landscape. Starting July 1, teachers with less than 95% attendance at school will receive only half pay and risk deletion from the payroll, while those meeting the threshold will receive full compensation with genuine explanations for minor absences.

This biometric system, through the Teacher Effectiveness and Learner Achievement (TELA) platform, creates an accountability framework. Unlike previous pleas for compliance, this innovation links payment to verifiable presence, addressing the Inspectorate of Government's finding that teacher absenteeism costs Uganda billions annually and robs learners of nearly two hours of instructional time daily. For too long, teachers have stolen children's futures through absence, denying learners quality education.

The knock-on effects will be big because with teachers consistently present, classroom instruction will improve, lesson preparation will align with actual teaching time and learners will benefit from stable learning environments.

While concerns about teachers needing time for lesson preparation are valid, the 95% threshold accommodates legitimate needs while eliminating

habitual absenteeism. The Government should, therefore, ensure proper training, particularly for rural educators. However, as the education ministry cures one ailment, let it beware of those who are always present in school and in class, but are not pulling their weight in ensuring that the teaching and learning process runs smoothly.

We also urge all stakeholders, including parents, communities and educators to embrace this reform. Furthermore, the Government should cascade this accountability model to other ministries, departments and agencies where absenteeism similarly undermines public service delivery. When civil servants know their pay depends on presence and performance, we shall all benefit.



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