



## MPs reject govt proposals on teachers' pay



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Members of Parliament have rejected the proposed salary enhancement of secondary school teachers saying that the glaring disparity between the pay of science and arts teachers must be addressed.

This followed a presentation by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Public Service, Catherine Musingwire, to the Committee on Public Service and Local Government in which she revealed that the proposed 15 percent salary increment would see science teachers earn twice more than the arts teachers.

The Committee meeting was held on Wednesday 2 May 2018.

The proposed increment if implemented would mean that a graduate secondary school arts teacher will earn an additional Shs90,201 to the current Shs601,341; while a diploma secondary school teacher will earn an additional Shs67,062 to the current Shs447,080.

On the other hand, a graduate science teacher will earn Shs1, 800,000 up from the current Shs1, 089,000 and the diploma counterpart will earn Shs1, 200,000 up from the current Shs625,067.

According to Musingwire, the increment is a short term intervention in response to the continued requests to increase salaries of teachers.

“The current financial constraints can only allow for the 15 percent enhancement of teachers’ salaries in the 2018/2019 Financial Year. Government also committed to recruit teachers for 106 seed schools and the Ministry’s budget has to be shared across to cater for both priorities,” said Musungwire.

The legislators however expressed disappointment with the proposed salary enhancement and resolved to hold further consultations aimed at harmonizing salaries of all teachers.

Johnson Muyanja (NRM, Mukono County South) said that the increment is not satisfactory.

“We appreciate government for responding to the cries of the teachers but increasing the salary of a science teacher by Sh.800,000 and that of an arts teacher by Shs.67,000 is unacceptable,” said Muyanja.

Silvia Akello (NRM, Otuke) said that all teachers perform the same job and therefore the huge difference in their salaries is unfair.

“If we accept this proposal to be presented on the floor of Parliament the way it is, the Committee Chairperson and the Minister [of Education] will be torn apart...Let the government make reconsiderations and ensure harmonization,” said Akello.

Hon. Okin Ojara (Ind., Chua West) noted that the glaring disparity in the teacher’s salary enhancement will demotivate those teaching arts subjects. He argued that it would be unfair for the committee to approve a proposal which will cause disharmony amongst teachers.

“We are rejecting this proposal not because we are undermining the Minister but for the good of the country. In every community, teachers are so influential and the majority yet we are trying to sideline them,” said Ojara.

Attempts by the Minister of Public Service, Mukasa Muruli to convince the MPs to approve the proposal were futile. He told the MPs that the decision was reached at by Cabinet chaired by President Yoweri Museveni following wide consultations.

“Cabinet is consultative and in its wisdom felt that Shs2m is good for a science teacher based on the development plan of the country. Cabinet is also committed to ensuring that the principles of equity are adhered to in salary enhancement and that is why in the subsequent enhancements, the arts teachers will be prioritized.

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