

## Teachers Ready for Junior Secondary Learners

The Teachers Service Commission (TSC) has trained 60,000 teachers on the new curriculum in preparation for junior secondary learners who will report to Grade 7 next year.

The first phase targeted teachers from private, public regular and special needs schools who will handle students from Grades 7 to 9.

Each school presented six teachers specialising in languages, pure sciences, applied sciences, mathematics, humanities and technical subjects. The exercise ran from April 25 to May 13, 2022 at different venues in the counties. The activity also involved sub-county directors, curriculum support officers and tutors from Teacher Training Colleges. The sessions were both face to face and virtual.

Speaking at the launch of the exercise at the Kenya Institute of Special Education last month, TSC Chief Executive Nancy Macharia said all teachers will be equipped with the needful resources to implement the competency-based curriculum and competency-based assessment.

Dr Macharia said the curriculum advocates for hands-on approach to learning that requires teachers to be innovative and possess the technical capability to assist learners to explore their potential.

"The pedagogical approaches used in curriculum delivery are inquiry-based, demonstration, discussions, experimentation and other methods that will assist the learner to develop their talents, potential and skills," she noted.



TSC CEO Dr Nancy Macharia arrives at the Kenya Institute for Special Education to launch the training of junior secondary school teachers on Competency Based Curriculum. She's flanked by education stakeholders.

"The teachers will be expected to improvise teaching and learning resources available in the environment." She added that the government had allocated Sh1 billion for the capacity building drive that targets to retool 116,024 secondary school teachers by the end of the year.

## How to Spot and Assist Staff with Suicidal Tendencies

By Regina Nduati

Kenyan teachers are reeling from shock after reports that four Kenyan teachers have taken their own lives within one month in Nyamira County.

Yet many Kenyans of all ages, professions and gender continue to take their lives for various reasons.

But it is possible to identify a person with suicidal tendencies and avert the tragedy before it occurs. With the right skills and patience, you can spot the tell-tale signs and talk someone out of suicide.

Suicide is caused by, among others, family issues such as wrangles over land ownership, domestic violence, infidelity, separation, divorce and death of a close person schizophrenia and anxiety.



Other people may exhibit hopelessness, sleep disorders, moodiness and sudden changes in their personality such as withdrawal from their loved ones and keeping social and emotional distance.

Other causes are barrenness, sexual dysfunction, infections such as HIV, syphilis, herpes and gonorrhoea and chronic conditions such as cancer.

Suicide is also caused by social isolation, drug abuse and alcoholism and mental disorders such as depression.

But regardless of the underlying issues, suicide can be averted if the signs are identified and dealt with in time.

These signs may vary from one person to another, depending on age, occupation, environment and gender. But the common indicators include a sudden carefree life.

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## How to Assist Form One Students to Adjust to High School Life

Transitioning to secondary school is every student's desire. But the new environment that is often characterised by busy schedules, new routines, fresh challenges and lofty expectations may sometimes cast a dark shadow over the future of Form One students. Nevertheless, high school life can equally bring fulfilment and open up new opportunities for them. Here are views from some teachers on how they can help students adjust to the new high school life:



**Anthony Okoth Abele**  
Teacher, M.M Shah Primary School, Kisumu

We should encourage students to have a guide for studying because it will help them to prioritise their curricula and co-curricular activities. This also enables them to be focused and accountable.

**Christine Gikunda**  
Teacher, MCK Kiringo Primary School  
Buuri East, Meru



I advise students to choose their friends wisely and not be swayed from their values. We should advise them on how to live within their financial means, and how to overcome peer pressure.



**Kennedy Kunani**  
Koyonzo Boys High School, Kakamega

Teachers can help them by grouping learners from different levels and allocating a teacher to guide them; installing peer counsellors; having frequent class meetings to check up on how they are faring and address their issues; and involving them in school activities.

**Edinah Chebet**  
Teacher, Nyaberi Primary School, Kericho

We should remind our Form One students not to forget their family background, dreams and aspirations – that they are the masters of their own destiny.



**Jacob Muringi**  
Principal, Mbararani Secondary School, Kilifi

We assign our Form One to a senior student who acts as their mentor for a period on one year. During that period, the mentor ensures that the mentee has been familiarised with the school routine and the do's and don'ts – which we have as the code of conduct.



### The Real issue

## You can Spot and Deal with Suicidal Cases among Teachers

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Other people may exhibit hopelessness, sleep disorders, moodiness and sudden changes in their personality such as withdrawal from their loved ones and keeping social and emotional distance. Yet others will buy ropes, and other poisons or start visiting tall buildings, cliffs and waterbodies. When you have sufficient reasons to think that someone is about to commit suicide, try engaging the person in meaningful conversations. Be tactful and let them open up. This may take several sessions and days but keep on building up the momentum for any positive outlook at every encounter. Allow the person to ventilate as much as possible until all the heavy and dark thoughts come out.

If they mention where they have hidden the suicide notes and poisons or ropes with which to take their lives, immediately hide off those things.



If the matter is beyond you, encourage the person to seek psychological help through professional counseling. Accept your colleagues and your loved ones who have attempted to commit suicide unconditionally without being judgmental. This will make them accept themselves and in turn they will see the need to live. Walk with them along the challenges that they could be facing at a professional and personal level. Most importantly, guide the person in addressing the issues that led to the suicidal thoughts in the first place so that the attempt doesn't recur. In case the cause of suicidal thoughts is mental disorders, advise the person to go for diagnosis and treatment.

Regina A. Nduati  
Teacher and Counseling Psychologist  
Kabete High School, Kiambu

## Secondary School Principals Throw their weight behind CBC



A section of teachers attending the 45th annual delegates conference in Mombasa.

All 10,000 principals have resolved to support the implementation of the Competency Based Curriculum (CBC).

The resolution was made at the 45th Kenya Secondary School Association (KESSHA) conference held from April 18 to 22 in Mombasa.

Speaking at the conference, KESSHA National Chairman Kahi Indimuli urged the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) to update principals on the readiness of CBC curriculum designs for junior secondary school.

"Doing so will give principals an opportunity to review and provide corrections, rather than the designs coming at the time the students are in school, he said.

Mr Indimuli said KESSHA supported the initiative by some schools to conduct drugs tests in schools to curb indiscipline.

Other speakers called for the review of laws and regulations so that students found culpable of organising strikes in schools were held individually responsible.

Principals from selected regions shared the difficulties they went through during the COVID-19 closures.

Opening the conference, President Uhuru Kenyatta said his administration was focused on reforming the education system.

"To ensure no child is left behind due to their social-economic background, my government has increased capitation per child in secondary schools to KSh22,244," the President said.

The conference was the first physical meeting after a break of two years occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic.

**There is need to review the fees guidelines to inform issues of capitation and fees payable by parents in boarding schools. Last review was done 10 years ago.**

**A resolution from KESSHA Conference**

### Know Your Regional and County Directors: Rift Valley & Turkana



**Adow Bardad**  
Regional Director  
Rift Valley



**Lewis Mutegi**  
County Director  
Turkana



**Benjamin Busienei**  
Sub County Director  
Turkana South



**Fredrick Ekalale**  
Sub County Director  
Turkana West



**Wilfred Musigisi**  
Deputy County Director/  
Sub County Director  
Turkana Central



**Gabriel Kapus**  
Sub County Director  
Loima



**Paul Okwaro**  
Sub County Director  
Turkana East



**David Agwanda**  
Sub County Director  
Turkana North/Kibish

## Spirited Teacher Nurtures Students through Sports



Ben Owiti (left) with some of the students he's nurturing through sports.

By Ben Owiti

My passion for football comes from my family genealogy. My father was a footballer during his formative days as well as many of his male relatives.

And for me, the love for soccer began early in my childhood. I easily broke into the first 11 teams in primary and secondary school. But I did not imagine I would be a coach and a referee of the game one day. Yet, thanks to my expertise, I now nurture learners talent on the sport during my CBC classes.

As a player, I dedicated myself to do my best and I give thanks to both my primary and secondary school teachers who identified my talent and nurtured it at a tender age.

They gave me an opportunity to exploit my talent and this helped in building my love for the game.

At my Sawagongo High School in Siaya County, the game was taken more seriously unlike in my primary school. The players in the school team were picked from Form One to Four. I earned a slot in the school team while I was Form Two. This motivated me to perform better in class. My discipline standards rose. So did my skills in the soccer game.

I thank my teachers and coaches, specifically Mr Onyango Baraza, now deceased, Mr Magero and Dr Fred Odindo for ensuring that I toed the line during trainings.

My enthusiasm for the game continued after high school to Kamwenja teacher training college. The college tour was short but I played football in the college team up to national level. At the college, I was the college physical education captain. I piled up many certificates arising from rewards of being a football star.

This motivated me even more. After graduation, I continued with football in the estates and village where I lived as I waited for a job opportunity with the Teachers Service Commission.

Often, I volunteered to train teams in local fields and open spaces. Since I got employed, I have consistently coached my learners in the sport.

As a teacher, a referee and a coach, I have mentored and trained a number of pupils at different levels of competitions organised by the Ministry of Education. I have attended many soccer trainings organised by Kisumu County Primary School sport's committee, Football Kenya Federation and Confederation of African Football (CAF). I have since qualified for a CAF-C coach certificate. This CAF certificate qualifies me to practise soccer coaching and to officiate at FKF games as a referee.

At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, I reached out to youths of various ages and kept them busy playing football. I also used the opportunity to guide and counsel them on various social issues such as early marriages and substance abuse.

With the return of sporting activities in schools, my coaching and officiating job is already cut out at the school, zonal, county and national levels. This is besides my normal teaching duties that now include sporting and nurturing sports talents in my CBC classes.

Ben Owiti Owiti  
Wachara Primary School  
Kisumu

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