

DIOCESAN SCHOOLS| RE-ALIGNING FOR THE PROPOSED NEW CURRICULUM by Rev. Fr. Paul Ngeno

The current 8:4:4 education system, together with its curriculum is currently under reform. It is now quite clear that the Kenya Institute for Curriculum Development (KICD) and the Ministry of Education will not relent on this endeavor. All the stakeholders are currently working on the recommendations of the 2011 task force (TF) on the re-alignment of the education sector to vision 2030 and the constitution of Kenya 2010; that a more feasible and comprehensive structure of Kenya's education system and curriculum reform that specifies the expected competences at every level of learning, be adopted. This task force proposed a 2-6-3-3 system. The rationale of the revised structure is to ensure learners acquire competence and skills that will enable them to meet the human resource aspirations of vision 2030. The revised structure will also focus on early identification and nurturing of talents in individual learners. This is distinct from the present situation where students either pass or fail and exit the system.

Various stakeholders (the church included) are currently giving their various proposals on how the new system should be managed and the content of its curriculum. The gist of all proposals is that the new and revised structure should impart the relevant knowledge, skills and values while being all inclusive to all learners no matter the individual ability.

It is my particular view that as a church (specifically our diocese), our focus should also be trained towards the future of our educational institution in this endeavor of educational structure under review.

The new structure presents us with a number of challenges that should form part of our reflective future planning for our institutions. What are the implication of this new structure to our institutions in terms of management, staffing and costs? What specific and relevant skills and values can we re-align our institutions so as to be relevant to the communities in which they are situated?

Whatever our future plans are for our institutions, the following areas demand our utmost attention:

Unique skills and values

True learning is one that imparts practical skills and values to the learners.

Three areas are core. They include:

Religious education – Religious education impart the relevant values that our Kenyan society so desires. Value- and faith-based society is well founded and stable.

Information and communication technology (ICT) – more attention should now be focused on establishing well equipped computer lab and general ICT education in our institutions so as to be in tandem with the first moving technological world. Computer studies should no longer be only for those who choose to pursue it but should be an integral part of one's learning. It is also in this light that our primary academies should now strengthen this department given the fact of the laptops being distributed in public schools by the government.

Agriculture - the circumstances we find ourselves in the diocese is that of agricultural communities. For the relevance of our educational institutions, we need to invest well in the skills of agri-business, skills that will respond adequately to the needs of the local community. In this way we enhance the applicability and reliability of the education of our learners.

Staffing

The revised structure has great implications on the staffing of our institutions. To realize the proper re-alignment of our institutions to the new system, management and staffing have to be enhanced. How prepared are our staff for these skills and competences? Will this new system demand that they enhance their studies or that new specialized staff be brought in?

Cost implications

One of the main concerns of the various stakeholders tasked with the review of the current education system and curriculum is the cost implication in implementing it. It is widely viewed that the new system will be costly. This too should be the concern of our educational managers and so prepare accordingly for this re-alignment. New structures, projects and programs will be demanded especially for practical purposes.

Let's all focus on this endeavor so as to enhance the formation of our learners.