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REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**SPEECH OF THE CABINET SECRETARY OF EDUCATION
PROF. GEORGE A. O. MAGOHA, CBS ON 6TH AUGUST,
2019 AT KENYA INSTITUTE OF CURRICULUM
DEVELOPMENT DURING THE PRE-CONFERENCE ON
LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION**



**Principal Secretary, State Department for Early
Learning & Basic Education,
CEO, Kenya Institute for Curriculum Development,
MoE Senior Officers,
Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am pleased to welcome you all to the Pre-conference on Language in Education. This is the third preconference in a series of eight held before the main August 16, 2019 National Conference on Curriculum Reforms scheduled at the KICC.



So far, we have received very useful feedback from the pre-conferences that have been concluded. I hope that this one too, will provide us with a solid Position Paper as would be all the other pre-conferences.

The main objective of this pre-conference is to interrogate issues related to language learning with the aim of shaping learning of the languages, in the backdrop of the implementation of the Competency Based Curriculum.

Allow me also to thank Kenyans for the overwhelming support they have continued to offer to the CBC implementation



countrywide since January 2019. My Ministry has worked consistently and diligently to ensure that timelines are met and results achieved during the development of the CBC and its implementation. Our stakeholders have also been very supportive and teachers, parents and curriculum implementation officers have embraced the CBC. Parents have also hailed their involvement in classroom participation.

As I said earlier, the Ministry of Education is preparing to host the next National Conference on Curriculum Reforms in Kenya on August 16, 2019. The theme of the conference is **'Expanding Inclusion: Leave no Child Behind through**



the Education Reforms’. This conference hopes to bring together education stakeholders from all over the country to review the progress made in reforming education, and identify gaps and strategies for moving the process forward.

The anticipated gains of CBC will be realised by providing every Kenyan learner with world-class education in the skills, knowledge and attitudes that they require in order to thrive in the 21st century. Moreover, this will be accomplished through the provision of excellent facilitation by teachers, school environments, resources and a sustainable visionary



curriculum that provides every learner with seamless, competency based high quality learning.

We all anticipate to have a transformed education sector that can compete favourably globally. For this to be realised, my ministry and the Teachers Service Commission has embarked on continuous training of teachers for Early Years Education to equip with the necessary skills to be able to deliver the CBC. This month, teachers handling Grade 4 learners will be trained in all counties ahead of the rollout of the grade 4 curriculum next year. Teacher training will be a continuous process to ensure that they are well versed with current pedagogical



knowledge and skills in line with the 21st Century competencies and teaching standards.

I am happy to note that the theme of the pre-conference, *Expanding Inclusion: Enhancing Learning through Language Education in the 21st Century*, is in line with the Vision of the new curriculum which is **“to have an engaged, empowered and ethical citizen”**. It is also relevant to the Mission of the CBC - “nurturing every learners’ potential”. Indeed, a time has come for us to embrace differentiated learning and active engagement of every learner in the learning process.



Languages play central role in all aspects of our daily lives. Their role is not limited to communication only; rather it extends to the vast branches of knowledge and human sciences. Languages are capable of developing human knowledge and extending it for the benefit of human kind. The general importance of languages justifies the need for their planned, systematic and organised teaching. It is a proven fact that language learning has a bearing on acquisition of desirable competencies in other school subjects and learning areas.



In the Basic Education Curriculum Framework (2017), which is the blue print for Kenya’s curriculum reforms, the Early Years Education curriculum has adopted the term “activity areas” to ensure that learning is activity based, and to provide a smooth transition from pre-primary level to Grade one. The introduction of indigenous languages and foreign languages in Grade 4 is in line with the Constitution and international trends. This will provide learners with opportunities for personal growth and development, both locally and internationally. The learning of other languages will indeed give our people and nation leverage.



As we build stronger international links, the role of language education has never been more important. I would like to thank you all for the role you are playing to ensure that our learners keep abreast with 21st Century competencies in language learning. These are communication and collaboration; critical thinking; problem solving; imagination and creativity; digital literacy and citizenship. Our endeavor should be to ensure that learners acquire the necessary language skills in order to remain relevant in the international arena, and for both national and global competitiveness.



Finally, I urge each one of you to take time to listen with an open mind and interrogate the issues presented during this pre-conference. This will help us forge ahead and improve implementation of the of the languages curricula.

As food for thought, I now leave you with the quote by Nelson Mandela: "*If you talk to man in a language he understands it goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language it goes to his heart*". These words speak to the theme of this year's pre-conference on language in education which is - ***Expanding Inclusion: Enhancing Learning through Language in the 21st Century.***



Thank you and God bless you all.