

Mwalimu News

A Monthly Publication of the Teachers Service Commission



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Good News for 9,000 New Teachers

Some 9,000 newly employed teachers have a reason to smile after the Teachers Service Commission introduced a computerised system of capturing their reporting details at their schools.

It means the reporting details - referred to as casualty reports - will be relayed directly to the TSC headquarters for fast processing of salaries and other processes. The move will see the salaries being processed in the first month as opposed to previous years when they have had to wait for as long as three months.

The new teachers, recruited in July and August will report to schools beginning September 1, 2021.

In a circular, TSC Secretary Nancy Macharia said the teachers will report under new online reform measures currently being implemented by the Commission, which allows them to receive their salaries at the end of the first month "In enhancing its transformation agenda set out in the 2019/2023 Strategic Plan, the Commission has successfully developed the entry/exit report module and migrated its services related to posting, transfer and deployment of teachers as well as filling entry and exit returns to an online system," said Dr Macharia in a circular to all education field officers dated August 24. She directed that there will no longer be manual filing of entry and exit reports commonly known as 'Casualty returns' for teachers once this new online module is fully implemented on October 1.

Principals usually write the 'casualty returns' whenever new teachers report to schools, data which is subsequently sent to TSC and used to pay teachers or undertake other processes. TSC has already sent a circular to all field officers spelling out implementation of the new online module on posting, entry and exit of teachers. Dr Macharia said the move is intended to eventually phase out all the manual processes pertaining to issuing, submission and processing of posting, transfer, deployment letters and related returns with the ultimate goal of enhancing service delivery to teachers and stakeholders.

"The module will be accessed on the TSC website where the user guidelines have also been provided. The Commission's field staff and Heads of institutions are directed to acquaint themselves with the module in readiness for roll out on October 1," Macharia said. In June, TSC advertised for 8,914 teaching vacancies out of whom 3,897 will be posted to primary schools and 4,927 for secondary. For secondary schools, the additional number of teachers is towards addressing the 100 per cent transition from primary school.



Stakeholders attending launch of TSC Teacher Preparedness Study ahead of school reopening

TSC Steps Up Stakeholder Engagement

Over the last eight years, the TSC has embraced unfettered dialogue as a means of managing industrial relations in the teaching service. This has given stakeholders a chance to be involved in the reforms that the Commission is carrying out to ensure that the teaching sector remains professional, peaceful and free from industrial disharmony. The TSC is committed to provide outstanding working and professional environment for all the 330,671 teachers in its employ. As proof of this, in June, we paid the last salary under the 2017-2021 (CBA), which ensured that our teachers now earn salaries that are comparable to their peers in the region, and in the public service.



Dr. Muturi, Chairman, TSC

Aware of the expiry of this CBA in June 30, 2021, we sought an advisory opinion from the Salary and Remuneration Commission (SRC) on the way forward. This paved the way for our negotiations with trade unions (KNUT, KUPPET and KUSNET).

On 13th July, we signed the new 2021/2025 CBA with the teacher's trade unions, a day that marked the beginning of a new dispensation that will enable us to continue delivering our mandate and ensure teachers are motivated to do their work. Under the new CBA, teachers will enjoy benefits including entitlement to a fully-paid and extended maternity and paternity leave days. I thank all the unions for putting the interests of our teachers as a priority and for their open-mindedness throughout the negotiations.

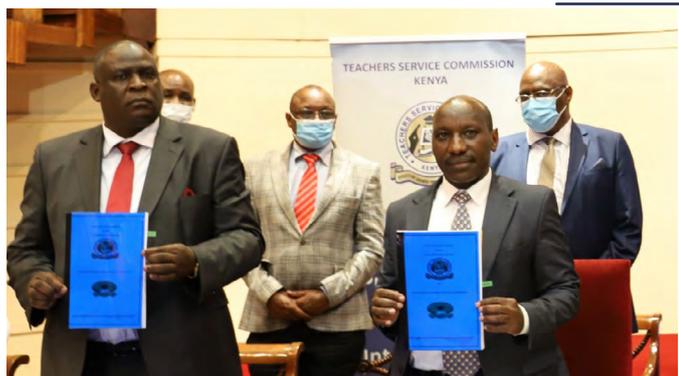
This is a win-win approach, and as partners, we agree to meet regularly and discuss issues that are pertinent. I urge all our teachers, and indeed the TSC, to continue delivering first-class services to our learners" - TSC Chairman, Jamleck Muturi

Editor's Note

Mwalimu News is our newest publication that will keep you updated on our work on a monthly basis. Through it, we will also be sharing with you interesting reads on how to develop your career, both personally and professionally. As our key stakeholder, you will have an opportunity to share your experiences and unique stories about your career with your colleagues. In this Premier issue, we bring you articles about where to get your COVID-19 jab, how you will benefit from the new Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), and how to protect your T-Pay password among other juicy stories.

Enjoy the read!

New CBA offers Fully-Paid Maternity, Paternity Leave for Teachers



Omboko Milemba KUPPET National Chairman and Dr Jamleck Muturi, TSC Chairman display signed CBA documents after a second negotiation meeting on July 13, 2021

Teachers will now enjoy fully-paid lengthened maternity and paternity leaves among other benefits following the signing of the new Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) between the (TSC) and trade unions.

The new CBA, which came into effect on July 1, 2021 will run till June 30, 2025. The agreement will see teachers benefit from an extended maternity leave from 90 days to 120 calendar days and paternity leave from 14 to 21 days. As part of the agreement, TSC will also prioritise the transfer of teachers married to each other to appropriate geographical areas to promote family values; promote those serving in Arid and Semi-arid lands and hard-to-staff areas holding administrative positions progressively; and utilise alternative dispute mechanisms to solve grievances. “We shall work round the clock to improve your terms of service and reward teachers excelling in sports, innovation, research and theatre,” said Dr Nancy Macharia, CEO, TSC.

The deal was struck following two meetings between the TSC and the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT), Kenya Union of Post Primary Education Teachers (KUPPET) and Kenya Union of Special Needs Education Teachers (KUSNET) immediately after the expiry of the 2017/2021 CBA.

Teachers Medical Scheme is the Best in the Country, says TSC Boss

The medical scheme offered to Kenyan teachers is the best in the country, TSC Chief Executive Officer, Dr Nancy Macharia says. Speaking at a recent sensitisation meeting for newly elected KUPPET leaders, Dr Macharia said the Medical Scheme surpasses many others available to public servants in terms of benefits offered. She cited the fact that the scheme was the only one that offers full cover on COVID-19 cases in Kenya.



Dr Macharia, CEO, TSC

The scheme is managed by Aon Minet, which on July 15th, held an online orientation workshop for KUPPET members. At the sensitisation workshop, participants were inducted on the scope of the medical cover, including member’s eligibility and registration, scheme processes and procedure, service providers, benefits and exclusions and communication mechanisms. Dr Macharia noted that the Commission was committed to guarantee good health and wellbeing of teachers and their families. “Since we introduced this scheme, we have recorded fewer cases of absenteeism arising from sickness,” she said.

Akello Misoni, Secretary General, KUPPET said: “We are happy that our teachers are enjoying one of the best schemes in the country, even as we push for improvements. Similar orientation workshops will be held for members of KNUT and KUSNET in due course.



Benefits
Brief Definition

Outpatient	Inpatient	Maternity	Dental	Optical
This is treatment that does not require admission or day care treatment.	This is treatment which requires admission in a hospital or day care surgery/procedure.	The maternity benefit is available to principal members and/or their spouse only.	This benefit caters for expenses related to teeth treatment.	This benefit caters for expenses related to eye treatment.

Teachers Defy COVID-19 to offer World-class Services, Shows study

A study by the TSC to assess teacher’s preparedness ahead of school reopening for the new academic year has revealed that teachers are ready to attend to learners amid the current COVID-19 challenges.

Titled *Teacher Preparedness for Term 1, 2021-2022 School Opening*, the online study collected data from 5,176 teachers from both urban and rural schools. Among the key findings, 99% of teachers are well appraised on the safety guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health to reduce the spread of the disease. These include regular hand washing, wearing of face masks and use of sanitisers. According to the study, 80.9% of teachers have access to clean running water, 20% regularly use sanitisers, while 20.7% of schools have psychosocial services. Some 95% of teachers have access to guidance and counselling services in schools, the

study says. The study also shows that brochures, posters and calendars were the best channels and communication materials for receiving COVID-19 messages. The level of teacher’s preparedness in the management of COVID-19 in preparation of Term 1, 2021, the study said, was adequate. It recommended the training of teachers on the management of COVID-19 and sustaining the dissemination of positive messages to teachers through use of bulk SMS, classroom posters and radio awareness.

The survey was presented by the Director of Quality Assurance and Standard Rueben Nthamburi at a stakeholder’s forum held on July 26. More than 200 stakeholders attended the meeting including the top leadership from all the main teachers unions, TSC and the Ministry of Education.



Mrs Jane Njage

Regional Director and County Director Nairobi



Mrs Emmy Kiget

Deputy Regional Director Nairobi, also Sub County Director for Kibra and Langata



Mr Milton Oyugi

Deputy County Director, also Sub County Director for Starehe, Mathare and Kasarani



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Mr Peter Kangwana

Sub County Director for Njiru and Embakasi



Mr Edward Zani

Sub County Director for Dagoretti



Jane Muturi

Sub County Director for Madaraka and Kamukunji

Quotes

“ Teachers, I believe, are the most responsible and important members of society because their professional efforts affect the fate of the earth.” — Helen Caldicott

“ Teach the children so that it will not be necessary to teach the adults. ” - Abraham Lincoln

My Transfer to Small, Distant School Unlocked my Leadership Prowess

After serving as Deputy Principal in Kirige Day Secondary School in Meru County for 11 years, my transfer to AIC Masimba Secondary School in Lower Yatta Subcounty, Kitui County as the Principal would not have come at a better time.



Lucy Mutuma: Principal AIC Masimba Secondary, Kitui County

On Friday, 12th January, 2018, I set out to my

new station. My choice of travel from Meru to Kitui was a Probox car with my husband as the driver. Upon arrival, a Board of Management member brought me up to speed about the school, which then had only three students, one teacher and a cook.

In utter disbelief, I decided I could not work in that school. My husband suggested that I needed some time to make my final decision on whether to stay as Principal or decline.

Unbelievably, I woke up with a feeling of inspiration the following morning that pulled me towards the “small school”. I resolved to go back to Masimba to do some “fact finding.”

I called the BOM Vice chairperson who took me on a guided tour of the school. There was nothing much to see beyond four classrooms, two of which were incomplete, and an office.

“No, I cannot make it here,” I whispered to myself silently, and I thought that was it. But soon, my sense of despair turned into a motivation. I settled down to work. And I worked. Three years on, the school boasts of a beautiful fence and gate. We have planted flowers and trees that have created a cool micro-climate in this dry area. The school received 118 form ones in July this year, and the total student enrolment has risen to 320. We are proud that the TSC has given us seven teachers in addition to four BOM teachers.

The school has already started a boarding section, courtesy of the assistance of the area Member of Parliament. Soon we will have a double streamed school.

In sum, I am grateful that the TSC sent me to the “small and distant” school. I would never have experienced my immense pride and sense of accomplishment in serving this nation in my comfort zone in Meru. Thank you TSC.



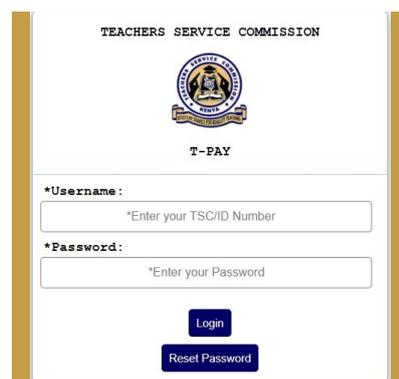
Perils of Exposing Your T-Pay Password

The Commission is concerned that some teachers make it easy for cybercriminals to defraud them by sharing their T-Pay passwords. Typically, such teachers give their T-Pay passwords to cybercafé operators and other parties to assist them to carry out transactions. In fact, in some towns, it is normal to find lists of teachers' names with their TSC and phone numbers and T-Pay passwords pinned on walls. Such teachers simply call cybercafés from the comfort of their schools and homes for updates on salary related issues. The cybercafé operators log into their accounts using the details they have and update the teachers via phone. This is the weakest link in such teachers' T-Pay password safety.

Given that most cybercafés are open to the public, the risk of cybercriminals stealing such teachers' identity for fraudulent purposes increases greatly. Indeed, there have been cases of teachers paying loans that they did not approve. Such fraudulent deals are invariably traced to this carelessness with their T-Pay passwords. Needless to say, the monies of such fraudulent loans are never disbursed to the conned teachers.

An equally serious breach of T-Pay password safety occurs when some teachers give loan marketers their T-Pay passwords, ostensibly to hasten disbursement of loan money that they sign with them. Online safety demands that you ask such marketers and even the financial institutions that employ them to call you to approve the transaction once they have finalised their part. Whereas identity theft is a growing national and global issue, you can greatly protect your T-Pay password by observing the following easy precautions:

- a) Do not share your T-Pay password with cybercafé operators and marketers of any kind or ask them to do online applications for you.
- b) If you must use a computer in a cybercafé, don't click on the icon asking you if you want to save your T-Pay password on chrome; your pay slip can fall into the wrong hands.
- c) Always log out from your T-Pay accounts when you are through after using a cybercafé or any computer and mobile devices such as an iPad, laptop and mobile phone that are not yours.
- d) Avoid using simple passwords such as your TSC number, first name, initials, birthday, ID and phone number and names of your spouse and children. These can be deduced easily by a smart cybercriminal.
- e) Create strong passwords that combine letters, numbers and punctuation marks and change them from time to time.
- f) Avoid using similar passwords across multiple accounts, such as your T-Pay and TSC email, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts; and across several devices such as your iPad, mobile phone and laptop; the risk of a hacker accessing all of them is real.



COVID-19 Watch

Have you been Vaccinated against COVID-19?

Since teachers the Government categorised teachers as front-line workers, **332,356** have received the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine while **123,265** have received the second dose as of **September 2nd 2021**. So far from 549 cases, we have lost 81 teachers to the virus since it was first reported in the country. Thanks to our full medical insurance cover, 468 teachers have fully recovered from the virus. The Government is currently rolling out mass vaccination across the country and this presents an opportunity for

teachers to get full vaccination and protect ourselves against Coronavirus.

You can get vaccinated at any of the centres approved by the Ministry of Health, which are assessable on the TSC website: <https://www.tsc.go.ke/index.php/downloads-b/file/963-moh-approved-covid-19-vaccination-posts>.

Vaccination is one of the effective ways of preventing yourself and others against the Coronavirus.

Get vaccinated to keep COVID-19 at bay.

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