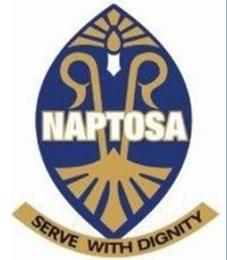




NATIONAL NEWS FLASH



SERVING EDUCATION SINCE 1904

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NNF 60 of 2020

4 December 2020

NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE REWRITES: OVERREACTION

The Minister of Basic Education today announced that the Council of Education Ministers decided that due to the extent of the leakage of the Mathematics Paper 2 and Physical Science Paper 2 of the National Senior Certificate Examination, it has been decided that the papers will be nationally rewritten on 15 and 17 December 2020, respectively.

According to the Minister, a key finding of the preliminary report of the National Investigation Task Team is that the viral spread of information on the cyber networks made it virtually impossible to accurately identify the number of learners that have had access to the leaked question papers.

Because of the ambiguity of the finding – it is merely an assumption at this stage that the leak was widespread – NAPTOSA believes that the decision to order a national rewrite of the two papers, is an overreaction. The term “viral”, used by the Investigation Task Team, conjures up the belief that the papers were splashed all over social media. But we have not seen evidence that this was in fact the case.

We noted the Minister’s indication that the decision was preceded by widespread consultation, *inter alia* with the teacher unions. NAPTOSA was indeed consulted, but what the Minister failed to report was that we registered our concern regarding the decision, because we believed it was not justifiable. We would have been comfortable with rewrites being ordered in those schools where the Investigation Task Team had definite evidence that pupils had been in possession of the papers. But to place additional pressure on the thousands of matriculants who had nothing to do with the leaked papers, in a year they had to endure so many obstacles and hardships, is just indefensible.

NAPTOSA supports the view that the integrity of the National Senior Certificate needs to be protected, but the question is whether a national rewrite is the only way to achieve this?

We applaud the Hawks for already having made an arrest in the case and trust that every adult involved in the leak of the exam papers will be apprehended. We reiterate that we wish to see them punished to the full extent of the law, because the stress and harm they have caused thousands of pupils is incalculable.

BASIL MANUEL

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR