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PRESS RELEASE

SCHOOLS COVERED BY TFF POLICY SHOULD NOT CHARGE FEES.

I am issuing this directive to every school in the mainstream education system, and agency schools, to stop imposing and collecting any forms of fees from parents relating to students enrolment.

The National Executive Council (NEC) decision No: 25 of 2016, still remain in force; meaning no fees of any sort are to be charged to parents.

School boards and administrations must uphold and comply with this NEC decision, which is the Government's decision in translating the Integrated Tuition Fee Free Policy.

Defying NEC decisions is a blatant defiance of lawful Government's directive, therefore I am instructing the Department of Education to further enforce the Government decision through the education system and also investigate schools that are charging additional fees apart from the TFF component.

Even schools should not hold back students' certificates and charge fees to parents for the release of the certificates. It is an illegal, inappropriate, and irresponsible action taken by schools.

This, O'Neill/Dion Government is investing heavily in education, and retiring every money that is budgeted to all eligible schools since 2012. The TFF is faithfully funded in the last four years and is captured in the 2017 budget priorities with the allocation of K602 million.

Treasury will release the TFF funds soon in two allotments, and through scheduled phases, to the Bank of PNG where the funds will further be disbursed to commercial banks where respective schools maintain their accounts with.

The TFF for the first time, after attempts made by the past governments, has shown positive indications of improving access to schools, especially for girls; improve retention; improve the quality of education; strengthen education management; and improve equity to schooling across the country.

The Government's stand is clear; imposing any kind of fees in relation to student enrolment would further derail and jeopardize gains made in education as per Government policy and goal for accessibility and quality education.

Approved for immediate release.

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HON. NICK KUMAN, MBE, MP
Minister for Education