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PRESS RELEASE

Ministry of Education Updates on Phased-in Return to Face-to-Face Instruction

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Following the approval of Cabinet for the Ministry of Education to proceed with the phased-in return to face-to-face instruction, schools across the country have begun the process of preparing to have students back on campus. Since the announcement was made on March 24th, 211 schools have applied to be part of the phased-in return.

To date, 61 schools have applied to return on April 12th and 161 schools have applied to return on May 10th. Fifty-five of those schools have been visited by their district education centers (DEC), who have verified the schools' readiness for approval to be granted to them. These verification visits from the DECs are ongoing to ensure that all schools are ready for the safe return of teachers and students. The remaining six schools in this first group will be returning in May for various reasons.

Schools will have varied approaches. Schedules will differ and so will the groups of students who will be coming back for shorter periods of time. All managements and administrations have been asked to be mindful of economic constraints and to not place unnecessary demands on students and their families. The Ministry of Education is working with the approved schools to put in place the requisite school bus runs and school feeding programs so that, step by step, the needs of all students can be addressed as best as possible.

Returning to face-to-face instruction, whether in April or May, is optional for schools. Schools are being given the opportunity to put into action their Learning Continuity Plans and to begin assessing students to bridge academic gaps. Teachers are encouraged to get vaccinated as soon as possible. These efforts are in preparation for a return to the classroom for all schools for the coming academic year 2021-2022.

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