Guidelines for opening schools in South Sudan for the academic year, 2024

Government of the Republic of South Sudan

Ministry of General Education and
  Instruction

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List of Abbreviations

ALP: Accelerated Learning Programme

ASEP: Accelerated Secondary Education Programme

BoG: Board of Governors

CED: County Education Department

CGS: Community Girls' Schools

ECD: Early Childhood Development

EU: European Union

GESS: Girls' Education South Sudan

IMPACT: EU Teacher Incentive Programme

MoGE&I: Ministry of General Education and Instruction

NGO: Non-Governmental Organisation

PES: Payam Education Supervisor

PTA: Parents Teachers Association

SMC: School Management Committee

SMOE: State Ministry of Education

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

Acknowledgements

Guidelines for opening Schools in South Sudan were prepared by the Ministry of General Education and Instruction (MoGE&I) and partners working in education sector. They intend to guide the operation of schools in the Academic Year 2024.

The process of development of these guidelines was participative and supported by many members of MoGE&I's team, donors and implementing partners. These guidelines were printed with the support of the UNICEF and distributed to the States, Counties and schools by the Girls' Education South Sudan (GESS) Programme and other partners.

Foreword

Since the academic calendar is normalised in 2023 after it was interrupted from 2020 up to 2022 by COVID-19 pandemic which had affected learning all over the world. Therefore schools in South Sudan will now operate normally in the academic year 2024 which will begin in February and will end in December. The examinations for candidate classes of P8 and S4 will be conducted from Mid-November to Mid-December of the same year.

The booklet is primarily prepared to inform the State Ministries of Education, County and Payam Education Offices, Head Teachers and teachers on the implementation of the Academic Year 2024.

The Ministry of General Education and Instruction (MoGE&I) would like to thank the School Technical Working Group (TWG) for the valuable work it has been undertaking. The Ministry would also like also to thank its partners for their active participation in discussions and support for the Technical Working Group.

Copies of the booklet will be distributed to the State Ministries of Education (SMoE), County Education Departments (CED) and Payam Education Offices (PEO) and schools guide them in implementation of 2024 academic calendar. I urge all stakeholders including education partners to support the implementation of the calendar.

By doing so we can together support teachers to start classes in the required date of Academic Year 2024 which ensure the completion of the syllabus for quality learning and better performance of the learners.

We look forward to your cooperation,

Hon. Awut Deng Acuil

The Minister,
Ministry of General Education and Instruction (MoGE&I)
10th November, 2023

Executive Summary

Though COVID-19 pandemic had disrupted the South Sudan Academic Calendar in the past three consecutive years, the Ministry of General Education and Instruction had normalized the academic calendar because the cases of COVID-19 pandemic gone down in the region and in South Sudan in particular which is from February to December. Therefore, the academic calendar of 2024 will begins on Monday the 5th February and ends on the 20th December.

These guidelines are meant to guide the State Ministries of Education, County and Payam Education Offices, as well as Head Teachers and teachers, on the implementation of the Academic Calendar of the Year 2024.

Arrangement of learning

In the Academic Year 2024 classes will begins on Monday the 5th February and ends on the 20th December, learners will be promoted to the next class based on their performance.

Management of class overcrowding

Recommended class sizes for Pre-primary, Primary and secondary are based on MoGEI minimum standard where twenty (20) learners in Pre-primary class, fifty (50) learners in primary class and forty five(45) learners in secondary class, and this is in line with the MoGEI policy.

Class larger than 50 learners in Primary or 45 learners in Secondary must be divided into streams of up to 50/45 learners to maintain quality of learning and physical distancing of the learners in each classroom while learners more than 20 in each Pre-primary classroom must be divided into streams.

Registration of learners with disabilities and functional difficulties

Learners with disabilities and functional difficulties have the right and shall be permitted to register in a school of their choice. This will typically be a school closest to their

residence. All schools which will register learners with disabilities and functional difficulties, and which require support to arrange learning process for these learners, shall work closely with their PTA's, SMC's/BoG's, PES and Disability Champions to rapidly achieve that. All learners with disabilities and functional difficulties shall start attending lessons on Monday the 5nd February 2024 just like all other learners.

Implementation of the New South Sudan Curriculum

Upon school opening Pre-primary, Primary and Secondary classes will follow the New South Sudan Curriculum.
The medium of instruction in pre-primary and from P1 to P3 classes is a national language selected by the school. The medium of instruction from P4 to S4 is English. National languages will continue to be taught as subjects from P4 to P8.

Safeguarding, psychosocial support and wellbeing

School staff, SMC/BoG, PTA members, school mothers, mentors and teachers shall pay additional attention to psychological needs of learners who are returning to school distressed, due to various causes shall be supported and provided with access to a mentor or a school mother.

Schools shall introduce a zero-tolerance policy and child friendly strategies for reporting and tackling bullying, corporal punishment, gender-based violence (GBV) and discrimination. All school-based violence shall be condemned.

Learners should be mentored through difficult situations they are experiencing and provided with support to stop bullying behaviours. There is zero-tolerance for bullying behaviours in schools.

Teachers are forbidden from using corporal punishment and any form of violence, discrimination and intimidation.

Health and hygiene

1) All learners and school communities shall be enlighten on Health and Hygienic measures to avoid being affected by diseases that are caused by not following the correct health and hygienic measures.
2) All school staff and learners must be enlightened on the importance keeping school environment clean hand washing protocols.
3)   Clean water and soap for washing hands must be provided in all schools. Staff and learners should wash their hands before and after having food and after using toilets.

School compound and school environment

1) School compound and all school infrastructures, inclusive of buildings and furniture, must be sufficiently aired.

2) Cleaned prior to school opening and daily after the school opens.

Timetable for assemblies and parades

1) School assemblies and parades are to be conducted normally based on master time table.
2) Sport and extra-curricular activities are to be conducted normally based on master time table.

Food, utensil and drinking water

1) Schools with a school-feeding programme shall follow the safety measures set by the Ministry of Health and communicated separately by WFP or other partner supporting the school feeding.
2) Learners should be guided to keep food, drinks, utensils, cups, bottles, and other personal items clean to avoid diseases caused by poor hygienic habits.

Guidance on 2024 Academic Calendar

- To enable fulfilment of the New South Sudan Curriculum within the directives of the General Education Act 2012, the school week in the Academic Year 2024 will be **a five** days a week and will run from Monday to **Friday.** School holidays and the school year both will be normal and Public Holidays will be observed.

- The MoGE&I has set the start date of the 2024 Academic Year will be on Monday the **5th February 2024** and end on 20th December 2024. Approximately, there will be **203 instruction** days in the Academic Year 2024. Learners will undergo their termly examinations at the end of each term,

- **Term 1** will begin on Monday the **5th February 2024** and will end on Friday the **10th May, 2024** with **67** instruction days. There will be two-week breaks which will be from Saturday **11th May and ends on Friday the 24thMay 2024.** There will be school-based in-service training (CPD) during the holidays and training will be for ten (10) working days.

- **Term 2** will begin on **Monday the 27th May, 2024 and end on Friday the 6th September, 2024** with **71** instructional days. There will be two-week breaks between Saturday the **7st September, 2024 and ends on Friday the 22nd September, 2024**. There will be school-based in-service training (CPD) during the holidays and training will be for ten (10) working days.

- **Term 3** will begin on **Monday the 23th September, 2024 and end on Friday the 20th December 2024** with **65** instruction days. There will be school-based in-service training (CPD) during the holidays and the training will be for ten (10) working days.
- Candidate classes of P 8 and S4 will undertake their final examinations in November-December 2024. The Examinations calendar for Candidate classes will be published separately.

NB: National Examination Secretariat should ensure that the examination for P.8 and senior 4 candidates are conducted within November through December 2024.

Public holidays in the Academic Year 2024

Public Holidays in term 1-3	Start date	End date	Public Holidays	School Holidays
Good Friday	Friday,29th March,2024	Friday,29th,2024	Friday	1 working day
Easter Holidays	Sunday- 31th March,2024	Monday- 1st April,2024	Sunday-Monday	1 working days
Eid al Fitr Holiday	Wednesday-10th April 2024	Thursday-11th April 2024	Wednesday-Thursday	2 working days
International Labour day	Wednesday-1st May,2024	Wednesday-1st May,2024	Wednesday	1 working day
SPLA Day	Thursday-16th May, 2024	Thursday-16th May, 2024	Thursday	1 working day
Independence Day	Tuesday-9th July 2024	Tuesday-9th July 2024	Tuesday	1 working day
Eid el Adha	Wednesday-17^h July 2024	Thursday-18th , July 2024	Wednesday-Thursday	2 working days

Martyr's Day	Tuesday-30th , July,2024	Tuesday-30th July,2024	Tuesday	1 working day
Christmas Holidays	Tuesday-24th Dec,2024	Thursday-26th Dec,2024	Tuesday-Thursday	3 working days
New year Holiday	Wednesday-1st Jan 2025	Wednesday-1st Jan 2025	Wednesday	1 working day

Other important days celebrated by schools

During each Academic Year there are important dates that schools celebrate and participate in. These days are not Public Holidays, but lessons on these days and celebrations are thematically focused to raise awareness of the learners to the topics these days are dedicated to. These special days include:

- International Women's Day (08 March)
- World Heritage Day (18 April)
- World Book Day (23 April)
- International Museum Day (18 May)
- Menstrual Hygiene Day (28 May)
- World Environment Day (5 June)
- International Day of the African Child (16 June)
- National Girls' Education Day (07 July)
- International Literacy Day (08 September)
- World Teacher's Day (5 October)
- International Day of the Girl Child (11 October)
- Global Hand washing Day (15 October)
- World Toilet Day (19 November)

- 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence (25 November)
- World AIDS Day (1 December)
- International Day of Persons with Disabilities (3 December)

Detailed of the Academic Calendar of the year, 2024

Term	Start date	End date	Public Holidays	School Holidays	No. of instruction days
Term 1	Monday-5th February, 2024	Friday-10th May,2024	Wednesday		**67 instruction days**
Easter Holidays	Friday- 29th March,2024	Monday- 1st April,2024	Friday-Monday	2 working days	
Eid al Fitr Holiday	Wednesday-10th April 2024	Thursday-13th April 2024	Wednesday-Thursday	2 working days	
International Labour day	Wednesday-1st May,2024	Wrdnesday-1st May,2024	Wednesday	1 working day	
SPLA Day	Thursday-16th May, 2024	Thursday-16th May, 2024	Thursday	1 working day	

In-service, school-based Teacher Training (CPD)	Thursday-13th June,2024	Wednesday-26th June,2024	-	10 working days	
End of term 1 Holidays	Thursday-13th June,2024	Thursday-13th June,2024	Thursday	1 working day	
Term	Start date	End date	Public Holidays	School Holidays	No. of instruction days
Term 2	Monday-27th May,2024	Friday-13th Sept,2024	Thursday-Friday		**71 Instruction days**
Independence Day	Tuesday-9th July 2024	Tuesday-9th July 2024	Tuesday	1 working day	
Eid el Adha	Wednesday-17h July 2024	Wednesday-17th , July 2024	Wednesday	1 working days	
Martyr's Day	Tuesday-30th , July,2024	Tuesday-30th July,2024	Tuesday	1 working day	
In-service, school-based Teacher Training (CPD)	21st Sept,2024	4th Oct,2024	-	10 working days	

End of term 2 Holidays	Friday-4th AOct, 2024	Friday-4th Oct 2024	Friday	1 working day	
Term	**Start date**	**End date**	**Public Holidays**	**School Holidays**	**No. of instruction days**
Term 3	Monday-23rd Sept,2024	Friday-20th Dec,2024			**65 Instruction days**
Parents days and closing for Christmas	Wednesday-18th Dec,2024	Thursday-19nd Dec,2024	Wednesday-Thursday	2 working days	
Christmas Holidays	Tuesday-24th Dec,2024	Thursday-26th Dec,2024	Tuesday-Thursday	3 working days	
In-service, school-based Teacher Training (CPD)	Monday-13th Jan,2024	Friday-24th Jan,2024	Monday-Friday	10 working days	
Total Instruction days in 2024					**203 Instruction days**