

Paper Laid on the
Table of the House
by the Committee
Chairperson [Hon. Julius
Melly] on Tuesday
26th June 2018
[Afternoon].

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

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KENYA NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TWELFTH PARLIAMENT – SECOND SESSION 2018

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND RESEARCH



REPORT ON THE MEETING TO ADDRESS THE OPERATIONS OF
BRIDGE INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIES HELD ON 2ND- 6TH JUNE
2018 IN LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM

Directorate of Committees
Clerk's Chambers
National Assembly
Parliament Buildings
Nairobi

June 2018

1.0 PREFACE

1.1 Mandate

Hon. Speaker,

The Departmental Committee on Education and Research is established under Standing Order 216 and mandated to consider all matters relating to the Education Sector. Specifically, the Committee:

- i. investigate, inquire into, and report on all matters relating to the mandate, management, activities, administration, operations and estimates of the assigned Ministries and departments;
- ii. study the programmes and policy objectives of Ministries and departments and the effectiveness of the implementation;
- iii. study and review all legislation referred to it;
- iv. study, assess and analyze the relative success of the Ministries and Departments as measured by the results obtained as compared with their stated objectives;
- v. investigate and inquire into all matters relating to the assigned Ministries and departments as they may deem necessary, and as may be referred to them by the House;
- vi. vet and report on all appointments where the Constitution or any law requires the National Assembly to approve, except those under Standing Order 204 (*Committee on Appointments*);
- vii. examine treaties, agreements and conventions;
- viii. make reports and recommendations to the House as often as possible, including recommendation of proposed legislation;
- ix. consider reports of Commissions and Independent Offices submitted to the House pursuant to the provisions of Article 254 of the Constitution; and
- x. examine any questions raised by Members on a matter within its mandate

1.2 Membership

The Education Committee was constituted by the House on Thursday 14th December, 2017 and comprises the following Members;

1. Hon. Julius Melly, MP - **Chairperson**
2. Hon. Amos Kimunya, EGH, MP - **Vice-Chairperson**
3. Hon. Moses Malulu Injendi, MP
4. Hon. Geoffrey Makokha Odanga, MP
5. Hon. (Dr.) Pamela Ochieng, MP
6. Hon. (Eng.) Nzambia Thuddeus Kithua, MP
7. Hon. (Prof.) Zadoc Abel Ogutu, MP
8. Hon. Catherine Wambilyanga, MP
9. Hon. Eric MuchangiNjiru, MP
10. Hon. Eve Obara, MBS, MP
11. Hon. Jackson Lekumontare, MP
12. Hon. Jerusha Mongina Momanyi, MP
13. Hon. John OrooOyioka, MP
14. Hon. Joseph Kipkosgei Tonui, MP
15. Hon. Lilian CheptooTomitom, MP
16. Hon. Omboko Milemba, MP
17. Hon. Peter Lochakapong, MP
18. Hon. Wilson Sossion, MP
19. Hon. Wilson Kipngetich Kogo, MP

2.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Departmental Committee on Education and Research received an invitation from Education International (EI) to attend a meeting in London, UK aimed at addressing the questionable operations of Bridge International Academies.

The objective of the meeting was to present a petition conveying the objections regarding Pearson's continued support of Bridge Academies during the Pearson Annual General meeting.

2.1 Delegation

The Committee selected the below delegation to attend the meeting:

1. Hon. Amos Kimunya, EGH,MP- Leader of the Delegation
2. Hon. Oroo Oyioka John, MP
3. Hon. Lekumontare Jackson, MP
4. Hon. Catherine Wambilianga, MP
5. Hon. Omboko Milemba, MP
6. Hon. Wilson Sossion, MP
7. Mr. Eric Kanyi- Delegation Secretary

However due to unavoidable circumstances, three (3) members of the Delegation were not able to join the delegation and attend the meeting.

The Delegation attended the meeting as observers to the proceedings since the Committee had not reached a common position regarding the operations of Bridge International Academies in Kenya. The Delegation was also able to pay a courtesy call to the outgoing Kenya High Commissioner to the UK.

Thus, this is the report of the Departmental Committee on Education and Research delegation which was selected to represent the Committee during a meeting organized by Educational International (EI) which took place on 2nd to 6th June 2018 in London, United Kingdom.

Having followed the proceedings organized by the Education International (EI), the Delegation recommends that the Committee follows up and engages the State Department for Early Learning and Basic Education on the continued operations of Bridge International Academies in the Country in view of the various concerns raised by Education Actors.

2.2 Appreciation

The Committee is thankful to the Office of the Speaker and the Clerk of the National Assembly for the logistical and financial support accorded to the delegation during this important assignment. The Committee is also thankful to Members of the Committee for selecting them to attend the meeting.

Hon. Speaker,

On behalf of the Education and Research Committee Delegation to UK and pursuant to provisions of Standing Order 199, I beg to table the Report of the Committee's Delegation to London, UK meeting.

DATE.....25/6/2018.....SIGN.....

HON. MELLY JULIUS, MP

CHAIRPERSON

EDUCATION AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Education International (EI) is a global Union Federation that represents organizations of teachers and other education employees. It is the world's largest sectoral organization of Unions with more than 32 million trade union members in about 400 organizations in 170 countries and territories. Education International's principal aims are:

- to further the cause of organizations of teachers and education employees;
- to promote peace, democracy, social justice and equality through the development of education and the collective strength of teachers and education employees;
- to seek and maintain recognition of the trade union rights of workers in general and of teachers and education employees in particular;
- to enhance the conditions of work and terms of employment of teachers and education employees, and to promote their professional status in general, through support for member organizations;
- to support and promote the professional freedoms of teachers and education employees and the right of their organizations to participate in the formulation and implementation of educational policies;
- to promote the right to education for all persons in the world, without discrimination through the establishment and protection of open, publicly funded and controlled educational systems, and academic and cultural institutions, aimed at democratic, social, cultural and economic development and the preparation of every citizen for active and responsible participation in society;
- to promote the political, social and economic conditions that are required for the realization of the right to education in all nations;
- to promote and to assist in the development of independent and democratic organizations of teachers and education employees, particularly in those countries where political, social, economic or other conditions impede the application of their human and trade

union rights, the advancement of their terms and working conditions and the improvement of educational services;

Bridge International Academies is one of the largest education companies in the World. Bridge currently operates in Uganda, Nigeria, India and Liberia especially in informal settlements. In Kenya, it operates in more than 400 primary schools. Bridge established its headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya in 2008. The first Bridge school was opened in Kenya in 2008 in the Mukuru community in Nairobi.

4.0 THE MEETING PROCEEDINGS

Education activists, teachers and global union leaders were invited to London by Education International (EI) to urge shareholders at the Pearson Annual General Meeting (AGM) to stop funding Bridge International Academies which is a for profit company that offer education to children.

Before proceeding to the Pearson's AGM which was taking place at Institute of Engineering and Technology (IET), the invited Education actors had a brief meeting at EI offices. This meeting was aimed at apprising the participants on the activities of the day and the intention of the procession which was to present a petition at the Pearson General Meeting.

The petition was meant to bring to the attention of the sponsor (Pearson Group) on various concerns raised by Education Stakeholders across the globe on the operations of Bridge Academies as an Education provider.

The invited participants during the meeting were representatives from Education International, the National Education Union (NEU) and Global Justice Now among others. The invited delegation from Kenya followed the proceedings as observers.

Some of the key concerns by Education Stakeholders against Bridge International Academies include:

- i. Engaging untrained teachers
- ii. Unsafe learning environment
- iii. Delivery of sub standard education that deepens inequality
- iv. Delivery of highly scripted standardized curriculum
- v. Exploitation of families through the fees paid

The stakeholders were of the view that these concerns deny children right to quality education hence affecting negatively the education outcomes in regions where Bridge Academies operate.

At the AGM meeting, Mr. Angelo Gravielatos from Education International and Kevin Courtney, Joint General Secretary of the National Education Union (NEU) presented a petition the CEO of Pearson, John Fallon.

Responding to Education International's concerns through the petition, the CEO of Pearson, John Fallon, informed the Education Actors that Pearson had investigated the concerns raised with Bridge and was satisfied with Bridge's response on how the schools through Bridge operate.

Despite the Pearson response, the Educators were emphatic on why they oppose the fee paying and the substandard education services promoted by Bridge. The Educators placed emphasis on the need for quality public education supported by qualified teachers as well as digital content which liberates learners.

The Educators were categorical that they were going to continue with the push to ensure that the Bridge Academies change their mode of operation to ensure that the Education standards delivered by their schools is of the required level to guarantee learners quality basic education.

5.0 DELEGATION'S OBSERVATIONS

The National Assembly Departmental Committee on Education and Research Delegation observed that the various concerns raised by Education International regarding operations of Bridge Academies were serious in view of the ongoing agenda of ensuring that quality education is delivered to all.

The Delegation observed that if the concerns were factual, then the quality of Education being offered in these schools may not be up to standard. The Delegation is of the opinion that there is

a need for the Committee to delve deeper into to this issue to ascertain the true position as regards the operations of these schools.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Delegation having followed the discussions and the petition presented to Pearson Company which is the main shareholder in Bridge Academies proposes the following **action points** as a way forward.

- i. Engage the Ministry of Education regarding the operations of Bridge Academies in the Country;
- ii. Engage the Bridge Academies Officials on the operations of Bridge Academies;
- iii. Engage key stakeholders including the carrying out public participation in communities where Bridge Academies are operating; and,
- iv. Carry out inspection visits to selected Bridge Schools.

The proposed action points will allow the Committee to independently investigate the operations of Bridge Academies in the Country and have a clear understanding on the concerns raised regarding these schools. The Committee will be able to come up with a report based on the facts that it has established and make relevant recommendations.