



EDUWATCH OPPOSES A PERMANENT SEMESTER ACADEMIC CALENDAR FOR BASIC AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

Our attention has been drawn to a comment made by a Deputy Director-General of the Ghana Education Service (GES), Dr. Kwabena Bempah Tandoh on Monday 17th January's edition of the Citi FM Breakfast Show to the effect that, Eduwatch was consulted by the GES in the decision to make the semester system permanent, per the new academic year calendar in Ghana's basic and secondary schools.

For the records, at no point was Eduwatch or its Executive Director ever consulted by GES/MOE in taking such a decision. Like all other citizens, we were only informed through GES's facebook page. The culture of confusing information with consultation in the education sector must end.

Critical systemic decisions like permanently changing a 3-term academic calendar system that predates independence should not be left for a GES/MoE Committee that did not even consult the Parliament. The lessons from the 3-year Vs 4-year SHS duration tango which affected our education system during the Kufuor-Mills era must remind us of the relevance of building broad stakeholder consensus on such key systemic decisions.

While we appreciate the need to harmonize the pre-tertiary calendar, the semester system cannot be used as the yardstick for harmonization since it is only an adhoc measure that emerged out of a Double Track challenge the government has been working to fix through various SHS infrastructural expansion interventions.

With about 80% of such projects completed, one can only expect that once SHS return to Single Track, possibly by next year, we shall revert to the traditional 3-term pre-tertiary calendar.

Eduwatch believes that the semester system emerged with the Double Track, and not at the back of any proven, unsurmountable challenges with the 3-term system. On this basis, it is only logical that the semester system leaves along with the Double Track.

There is no need to alter the traditional 3-year term system.

Accra, 17th January 2022.