

Belize National Teachers' Union



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Belize National Teachers' Union Press Release

BNTU Advises Teachers and Students to Remain Out of the Classroom

August 5th, 2020, The Ministry of Education, on June 8th, 2020, announced its intent to reopen schools on Monday, August 10th, 2020, and has since been on a continuous media campaign to that effect. The Belize National Teachers' Union (BNTU) has been closely monitoring the COVID 19 situation in our country and today has concluded that we must discourage our teachers from returning to school and also parents from sending their children back to their classrooms on Monday.

We have been in dialogue with the Ministry of Education (MoE) because of concerns coming from our teachers across the country due to lack of school readiness for Monday's reopening. They have constantly been reporting to the Union headquarters that many of their schools, especially those in rural areas, are unable to make the necessary infrastructural changes and to procure sufficient sanitization products to sustain the recommended daily protocols to keep our children and themselves safe. Unfortunately, MoE's response has been that their information and reports paint a picture contrary to ours.

Last night's announcement of an all-time high of 15 new cases in one day is now the catalyst for the position being taken by the Union today. The rapid escalation in the number of positive cases and the imminent threat of community spread is now cause for tremendous concern. Schools were closed when there were no cases in our country and so it is rather perplexing and we dare say nonsensical for this push for schools to be reopened, at this time, when this second wave of cases is on the rise. We are also yet to see the effects of the reopening of the Philip Goldson Airport on August 15th, 2020.

We must conclude by stating, that contrary to popular belief, and propaganda being shared, our teachers want very much to return to the classroom after being away from their students for so long. However, we will not encourage them to do so, to the detriment of themselves and their charges. We encourage them instead to begin working towards keeping students engaged in distance learning, whether online or through home based learning packages, until the current situation is stabilized and it is safer for teachers and children to be physically in the classrooms.

Corona Kills ... All Lives Matter! Wear your masks and practice social distancing. Stay Home and Stay Safe!!!

END

Motto: Service, Security, Success