Lower cadre teachers win big as Oyuu unveils five-year scorecard

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By Fredrick Odiero

The Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) Secretary General Collins Oyuu has announced a major financial breakthrough for teachers following the signing of the 2025-2029 Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) with the Teachers Service Commission (TSC), which provides salary increases of up to 29.5 per cent.

This comes as the Union boss and his team seeks a fresh five-year term, having secured endorsements from teachers across all eight regions following key milestone achievements over the past five years.

Oyuu said that the CBA, inked during a closed-door meeting at the Kenya Institute of Special Education (KISE), introduces both monetary and non-monetary gains, hailing the deal as a significant win, particularly for teachers in the lower job grades of Grade B5 to C3.

KNUT Secretary General Collins Oyuu speaking during a past teachers event.

Lower cadre teachers benefit most

According to Oyuu, teachers in job Grades B5 to C3, who fall within the lower cadre, will receive the largest increase of up to 29.5 per cent. These include Primary Teacher II at B5, Primary Teacher I at C1, Senior Teacher II and SNE Teacher II- Primary at Grade C2, and Senior Teacher I and SNE Teacher I- Primary at C3.

Those in Grades C4 to D5, the higher cadre, will see a modest but still meaningful rise of about 12 per cent.

The union, he said, also scored a win in retaining all previously gazetted hardship areas in the new CBA.

The KNUT boss added that the union is now pushing for more regions to be officially recognised as hardship zones, allowing affected teachers to enjoy related allowances.

Regarding non-monetary gains, the SG revealed that teachers nearing retirement will now be entitled to pension payments based on their years of service, a longstanding grievance the union has consistently raised.

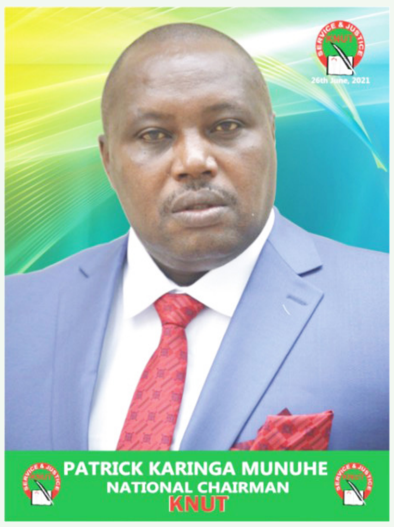
“Previously, if a teacher was dismissed even at 59 years and 10 months, they went home empty-handed. But we agreed that such teachers will now receive pension benefits proportional to their service. Your years of honest service should not be nullified by a single incident toward the end of your career,” he said.

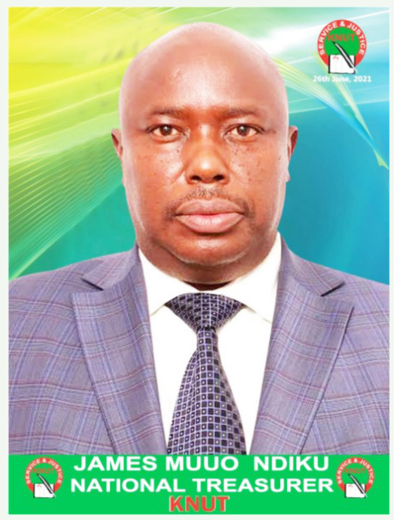
A review of the allowances, he added, was not conducted due to the ongoing development of the Teachers Code of Regulations, and the matter shall be revisited once the exercise is concluded.

“We had put on the table an increase of 60 per cent, but TSC said they could not proceed without the code of Regulations in place,” Oyuu said.

The KNUT boss expressed optimism about future gains once the TSC Amendment Bill currently with the Attorney General is passed into law.

The bill, he said, proposes a review of the Code of Regulations for Teachers (CORT), which is expected to unlock additional non-monetary benefits in the 2029-2032 CBA cycle.





Oyuu further revealed that discussions were underway to introduce a group life insurance scheme for teachers, a benefit already extended to other civil servants but conspicuously missing in the current teachers' comprehensive medical cover.

“Right now, teachers only benefit from a last-expense cover for funeral costs. That's not enough. We are working with the TSC and the National Treasury to roll out a proper group life policy,” he noted.

Oyuu's five-year scorecard

Since taking over the leadership of KNUT in June 2021, Oyuu says he has stabilised the union, with membership growing from 11,000 to the current 187,000 teachers. He added that the period has also seen a gradual increment of the Branch Commission tending towards the required percentage.

He noted that institutional management and administration have been strengthened, with all 110 KNUT branches now fully functional. He has also focused on addressing emerging issues in education, including the transition of learners and teachers under Competency-Based Education (CBE).

“I have championed the employment of teachers on contract and their confirmation to permanent and pensionable terms, in addition to resolving issues related to discipline, promotions, demotions, and transfers,” he said.

Oyuu further stated that he has ensured adherence to the KNUT Constitution with respect to organisational structures and functions.

He also pointed to efforts to review the CBA cycle, with proposals to reduce it from four years to two or three years, alongside continued advocacy for salary increments.

The union boss highlighted his role in pushing for a review of the contentious Career Progression Guidelines (CPG), which he said have contributed to the stagnation of teachers, particularly those in lower cadres.

He added that KNUT has worked to grow its membership by revisiting the agency fee framework to attract more teachers into the union.

On welfare, Oyuu said he has been involved in efforts to improve the teachers' comprehensive medical cover under SHA to enhance efficiency, while also engaging various government agencies and departments on matters affecting education and teachers.

He further noted improvements in union activism and leadership through consistent training of KNUT school representatives, as well as the strengthening of union structures, including KSR, BEC, County Councils, Regional Councils, Advisory Councils, NEC, and national steering bodies.

Oyuu also cited improved international relations with other teacher unions and affiliated organisations, alongside restored working relations between KNUT and key stakeholders such as the TSC, Ministry of Education, and the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) among other bodies.

Additional reporting by Roy Hezron