



NEW PATRIOTIC PARTY

POLICY SECRETARIAT

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THE PRESIDENT SHOULD APOLOGISE OR SACK HIS EDUCATION MINISTER

The entire nation was shocked last week to hear the President completely repudiate his Minister for Education and categorically deny that any policy to introduce Arabic and Chinese into Ghanaian schools had been approved by him or his Cabinet. The President insisted that there was 'absolutely no new policy' and asked the public to regard the matter as settled.

Far from settling the issue, his statement exposed a grave contradiction at the heart of his Government. The President now has only two credible options. If the Minister announced and pursued this policy without presidential and Cabinet approval, the President must sack him. If, however, the Minister acted with the authority or knowledge of the President or Cabinet, then the President must apologise to the Ghanaian people for denying a policy his Government had already set in motion.

Before the President spoke last week, the Minister had publicly declared five months ago on Thursday, April 24, that Chinese and Arabic would become compulsory foreign languages at the secondary school level and linked that new policy directly to the President's own vision for education. Hon. Haruna Iddrisu gave ownership of that policy to his boss. The President and his Office could not have been oblivious to that major news item and the controversy that it generated.

Nevertheless, NaCCA was then instructed by the Ministry to undertake the associated curriculum work. The review engaged about 160 writers and reviewers over several months and produced a revised curriculum that included Arabic and Chinese among the foreign-language options.

On 22 July 2026, the revised curriculum was presented to the Minister. He did not reject it or suggest that NaCCA had acted without authority. Instead, he referred it to the Ghana Education Service and directed GES to bring it to "full implementation readiness", take early ownership and prepare for smooth classroom execution.

When questions later arose about the revised basic school curriculum, Government clarified only that Chinese and Arabic would be optional at the basic school level. That clarification did not withdraw or explain the Minister's earlier statement that they would be compulsory at the secondary school level. On 3 September 2026, NaCCA, with support from the Confucius Institute at the University of Cape Coast, trained teachers to implement the new Chinese language curriculum.

To the public, these were legitimate acts of Government. The public is not part of Cabinet and cannot be expected to know what had or had not been approved behind closed doors. When the Minister responsible for education publicly attributes a policy direction to the President and advances it through the institutions under his authority, the reasonable conclusion is that he is acting with the authority of Government.

The President's subsequent declaration that there was "absolutely no new policy" therefore leaves a serious contradiction and raises issues about policy coordination and legitimacy at the Executive level of our governance system under President John Mahama.

Either the Minister was advancing a major policy direction without the President's authority, despite

presenting it as part of the President's vision, or the public has still not been given the full account of what Government had actually authorised and pursued. In effect, the President has disowned his own Minister's earlier account and conduct, notably after some public backlash.

There is also a legitimate question about public expenditure. Curriculum development requires writers, reviewers, workshops, technical personnel and administrative support. If there was "absolutely no new policy", why were public resources committed to developing the curricula, preparing the system for implementation and training teachers? What exactly were taxpayers funding, and who takes responsibility for that expenditure?

The President has also questioned where Ghana would find Chinese language teachers when the country already faces shortages of French teachers. That concern sharpens the inconsistency. If teacher availability remained sufficiently unresolved for the President himself to raise it, why had the process already advanced through curriculum development, GES implementation preparation and teacher training?

Arabic and Chinese should not, however, be treated as identical cases. Arabic already existed as an optional subject at junior high school level before the present Government took office. Chinese is different. The evidence describes a 2026 process that moved from ministerial direction through curriculum development, presentation to the Minister, GES implementation preparation and teacher training.

The issue now goes beyond this curriculum controversy. If the Minister could publicly announce a major policy direction, attribute it to the President, commit public institutions and resources to its development and move it towards implementation without the necessary approval, the public is entitled to ask what other decisions he or other Ministers may be taking without the required authority. That uncertainty damages confidence in the Ministry of Education and the Government itself.

The President cannot have it both ways. A Minister whose major policy pronouncements are subsequently disowned by the President cannot continue to command the confidence required to lead such an important sector. If the Minister acted without authority, he must be relieved of his position. If he acted with the authority or knowledge of the President or Cabinet, the President must apologise to the nation and provide a full account of the policy, the expenditure incurred and why the public was told otherwise.

Parents, teachers, school administrators and taxpayers are entitled to coherent and transparent Government communication. The matter cannot simply be declared closed. The President must choose: apologise to the nation or sack his Education Minister.

Issued by the Education Sector Policy Committee of the New Patriotic Party.