THE MALAWI NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS BOARD

2024 PRIMARY SCHOOL LEAVING CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

CHIEF EXAMINER`S REPORT

MATHEMATICS (P131)

General Comments on:

A.   **Quality of the Paper**

The 2024 PLSCE Mathematics paper was fair in the sense that it covered all the core elements in the syllabus and the language used was clear and suitable for the primary school leaving certificate examination.

B.   **General Performance of the Candidates**

Generally, the performance of the candidates was average. Many candidates attempted all the questions. Some candidates demonstrated masterly of skills as they were able to interpret data and present it in a graph correctly. However, those who performed poorly could be due to inadequate coverage of the syllabus by the teachers and lack of practice by the candidates as it was observed in some of their responses.

C.   **Comments on Candidates' Performance on Individual Questions**

 Section A

 Question 1

The item required candidates to select the Roman numerals that were correctly arranged in ascending order. The question was popular and many candidates got it correct.

Question 2

Candidates were asked to identify the prime factors of given numbers. Many candidates got it right.

Question 3

The question required the candidates to choose the equivalence of a given fraction; $\frac{2}{3}$. The question was popular and many candidates got it right.

Question 4

The question required candidates to select mass that was decreased using a given ratio. Most candidates got this question right.

Question 5

Candidates were asked to identify the temperature of the fourth day given the mean temperature for four and three days. Most candidates got it right.

Question 6

The question required candidates to choose commission percent. Many candidates failed this question.

Question 7

Candidates were asked to select the mode of the given masses. Most candidates got it correct.

Question 8

The question required candidates to choose an inequality formulated from a given mathematical statement. Most candidates got it right.

Question 9

The question required candidates to identify a quadrilateral given its properties. Most candidates failed this question. It really showed that they did not have the knowledge on the properties of some quadrilaterals. They gave answers such as square, rhombus and trapezium other than kite.

Question 10

The question required candidates to simplify decimals. Many candidates got it right.

Question 11

Candidates were required to identify the digit of a given place value. Most candidates got it wrong as they were only dealing with whole numbers and tens, instead of the decimals, tenths as per requirement.

Question 12

Candidates were required to calculate perimeter of a rectangle. Most candidates got it right.

Question 13

The question required candidates to simplify masses. Most candidates got it wrong.

Question 14

Candidates were required to choose a reduced length using the given ratio. Most candidates got it right.

Question 15

The question required candidates to calculate the distance given time and speed. Most candidates got it right.

Question 16

Candidates were asked to choose a conversion of a decimal to the given percentage. Most candidates failed it.

Question 17

Candidates were required to identify the number pattern for the given rule. Most candidates got it right.

Question 18

Candidates were required to identify a share of a given quantity by the given ratio. Most candidates got it wrong.

Question 19

Candidates were required to select the correct time given principal, interest and rate. Most candidates got it wrong.

Question 20

Candidates were asked to identify the type of triangle using the given properties. Most candidates got it wrong.

Section B

Question 21(a)

Candidates were required to find the sum in a practical problem. Some candidates failed because they were unable to interpret "**of**" as multiplication instead they were just dividing forgetting to multiply.

Question 21(b)

Candidates were required to simplify like terms only few failed because they were unable to differentiate between positive and negative signs, for instance, they wrote $8x + 5y + 3z$ instead of $8x + 5y - z$.

Question 22(a)

The question required candidates to calculate the amount of money paid as tax and most of the candidates got it right.

Question 22(b)

Candidates were required to calculate the amount of money Zawo got. Most of the candidates got it wrong as they were failing to formulate an equation $2y + 6000 - y = 10000$ instead of writing $2y + 6000 - y + 10000$.

Question 23(a)

The question required candidates to identify mode and calculate median. Most of them did well but few who failed they were doing vice versa instead of writing mode they were writing median and even the other way round.

Question 23(b)

The question required candidates to construct a parallelogram. Most candidates drew the parallelogram accurately but others failed because there work showed inadequate practice in construction.

Question 24(a)

Candidates were required to calculate amount of water left in the tank but most of the candidates failed to interpret mathematical terms like left which meant subtraction but also failed to relate litres to ml as a result they were just multiplying all the numbers found in the question.

Question 24(b)

Candidates were required to calculate the mass of the part of the goat that was sold. Most candidates failed because they were just multiplying $\frac{3}{4}$ by 12, instead of finding the fraction that is representing the remaining part which was $\frac{1}{4}$.

Question 25

The question required candidates to calculate area that was used to plant maize. Most candidates failed because they were unable to establish width of the rectangular field and that of the dam such as $(22m \times 10m) – (4m \times 2m)$.

Question 26

Candidates were required to calculate the price at which the motorbike would have been sold to make a profit of 10 %. Most of the candidates failed because they were just finding twenty five percent of K1800 000 instead of subtracting twenty five from one hundred percent.

Question 27

The candidates were required to plot picture graph. Most of the candidates did well but few did not get the maximum marks because they were unable to show scale such as 100 divide by 20 which would result to 5.

Question 28

Candidates were required to calculate the amount of money used to pay for the items purchased. Most of the candidates got it right, however some candidates failed to convert three units into total number of pens instead they were just multiplying three by K250.

Question 29

Candidates were required to calculate the new average age of the players. Most of the candidates got it wrong because they were finding the average of these numbers 11, 16, 22 and 33 instead of finding the total number of years of 11 players which was 16 x 11 = 176

Question 30

Candidates were required to calculate the balance that was brought forward in a cash account. Most of the candidates got it right.

D.   Recommendations to:

(i)   **Schools**

Teachers should:
- cover the syllabus fully more especially for standard five, six and seven.
- ensure that promotion of learners in all classes should be done on merit.
- encourage their learners to follow steps when solving mathematical problems.

(ii)   **Malawi Institute of Education**
- more textbooks should be distributed to schools
- new textbooks should be thoroughly edited to avoid errors like we have in the curriculum

(iii)   **Ministry**
- should make sure that it provides more qualified teachers to schools
- supervision of teachers should be done thoroughly to ensure quality teaching and learning.