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Cuba gets ready to start new school year

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Despite the complex economic situation Cuba faces, its classrooms will receive on Sept. 2 more than 1.7 million students, the Education Ministry (Mined) announced on Sunday. According to Education Minister Ena Elsa Velazquez, between August 14 and 22, Mined officials conducted a nationwide tour to verify material, human and financial resources for the new school year.

During this tour, they detected 'a good atmosphere' in the institutions, as well as the gratitude of teachers for the salary raise and the commitment to upgrade the quality of the educational process, she said.

According to the Cuban News Agency, the minister said that the enrollment for the 2019-2020 school year is slightly higher than the previous one, and 65,000 students will be in boarding, while 761,000 in semi-boarding centers.

She also stressed that the enrollment of children in nurseries increased thanks to the opening of new daycare centers in several territories and the recovery of capacities through constructive work, which allows to cover the demand.

It is expected that more than 162,000 teachers will be in the classrooms, for 95 percent coverage; the rest will be completed with the use of alternatives such as hiring by hours, payment for teacher overload or through initiatives such as the project Educating for Love.

Velazquez said that, as a result of the salary increase, of the 4,479 teachers who had resigned,

more than 2,200 wish to continue teaching; of the 1,858 requests for retirement, 1,470 wish to remain working; and about 6,191 have requested to come back to teaching.

The minister specified that so far resources such as notebooks, pencils, chalk, the teacher's media module, work sheets, glue and plasticine, as well as the necessary materials for cleaning are guaranteed.

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