



basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



social development

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25 August 2021

BASIC EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENTS BRIEF JOINT SITTING OF PORTFOLIO COMMITTEES ON ECD FUNCTION SHIFT

The Departments of Basic Education and Social Development have today briefed a joint sitting of the portfolio committees on basic education and social development on the progress of the Early Childhood Development Function Shift.

Following the Early Childhood Development (ECD) announcements in the February 2019 State of the Nation address, the Departments of Basic Education (DBE) and Social Development (DSD) have worked tirelessly towards the realisation of the change in responsibilities for the provision of ECD services.

President has signed the Proclamation relating to the transfer of powers of the ECD Function from the Minister of Social Development, to the Minister of Basic Education.

To this end, the two Departments established various governance structures to ensure a seamless transfer of responsibilities. The Departments have further reached consensus on the scope of the function shift. Provisions from both Chapter 5 (only as it relates to ECD programmes) and Chapter 6 of the Children's Act, 2005 (Act No. 38 of 2005) have been identified for transfer. Based on the recommendation from the Office of the Chief State Law Advisors (OCSLA), we have drafted two Proclamations. The first Proclamation is signed by the President, while the second Proclamation is signed by the Premiers for the transfer of power and functions to the MEC responsible for Basic Education in each Province.

The proclamations further specify that the date of the implementation of the ECD function shift will be 1 April 2022.

In preparation for the commencement of the implementation journey, both departments jointly briefed Members of the Portfolio Committee today, 25 August 2021, on progress made regarding the ECD Function Shift. The following activities will be undertaken:

ECD Census:

Information gathered as part of the census will be used to integrate ECD into the DBEs' Education Management Information System (EMIS) and thus expand the provision of education support programmes as well as play-based learning. Funded by the LEGO Foundation, the data and indicators will also establish a baseline for assessing the quality of learning through play in South Africa. The Census will run from August to December 2021. All registered and non-registered ECD Centres are strongly encouraged to participate, as this will broaden access to quality learning for every South African child. The virtual launch of the ECD Census takes place on Thursday, 26 August.

South African Early Years Index and Baseline Assessment

The South African Early Years Index is a nationally representative survey of the early learning and development outcomes in children aged 4-5 years. The information gained through the Index will allow the DBE to report on Sustainable Development Goal 4.2.2. on the proportion of 4-year-olds who are developmentally on track. It will also enable the DBE to track the improvements that we make in the quality of ECD provision over the next five to ten years. The Index will be accompanied by an array of contextual questionnaires that will help the DBE to understand the context in terms of infrastructure, governance, qualifications, resources, nutrition and curriculum implementation. Data collection for the Early Years Index has commenced, and will run until October 2021.

Stakeholder engagement dialogue series:

In collaboration with the National Education Collaboration Trust, monthly stakeholder engagement sessions will be held on specific themes regarding the challenges in the sector. The first event is being organised for 30 August 2021 during which the DBE will engage the sector on the envisaged Service Delivery Model.

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