



OFFICE OF THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

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MEMORANDUM

**TO: DEPUTY DIRECTORS GENERAL
CHIEF DIRECTORS
DIRECTORS
PRINCIPALS OF SCHOOLS
ORGANISED LABOUR
SGB ASSOCIATIONS**

FROM: HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

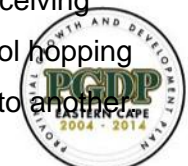
DATE: 06 FEBRUARY 2022

SUBJECT: RETURN OF LEARNERS TO SCHOOL ON FULL TIME BASIS

1. This memo is a sequel to the recent amendments to the Disaster Management Regulations brought about by the Cabinet, particularly with the scrapping of social distancing measures in the classroom, 'normal' schooling daily full-time attendance need to resume without delay.
2. In ensuring that the said declaration is complied with by the department, preparation for the return to full-time daily attendance has been done and completed in most of the school readiness elements, with a few almost towards completion. The following is the status of each of the elements:
3. The gazette will soon be released by the Department of Basic Education once the Minister signs it. She has finalised all consultations.

2.1 Learner Admissions

All districts had finalised admissions by the beginning of the school term with the exception of 4 Districts namely: NMM, BCM, SB and JG where there are still unplaced learners. Each of these districts has a placement plan in place and all unplaced learners are receiving assistance in terms of the plan. We are concerned with the phenomena of school hopping and parental choice that characterizes the January movement from one school to another.



2.2 Transfer of Second Tranche for Norms and Standards for School Funding

In November 2021 a file was submitted for payments totalling R159.2 million for all schools comprising of R65.4 million for Primary level and R93.7 million for Secondary level schools. Challenges experienced by the department concerning the APP used for uploading were addressed by sourcing assistance of the department of Transport with the upload function. This also meant adding more data to the upload files. According to the disbursement feedback information received from the systems the following was noted as is evident in the table below:

- i. R93.7 million was successfully disbursed to Secondary level schools
- ii. The file also showed a zero disbursement to Primary Level schools this might see some schools in this category with unsuccessful transactions.

Investigation on the matter is underway to ascertain whether the R65.4 million disbursed to Primary level was disbursed to all. Therefore, depending on the outcome of this analysis, transfer to schools will be corrected and transfers will be made to those schools that could have possibly been omitted due to this problem.

2.3 Provision of Learner Teacher Support Material (LTSM)

As it has been reported in various platforms, there has been an unprecedented delay on the provision of LTSM due to the budget cuts as it has been reported to stakeholders and schools. Funding was sought for this item from the DBE and Provincial Treasury. A much reduced relief amount was granted from the budget adjustment in December 2021 and by that suppliers were closed. A recovery plan kicked off in January 2022 and to date deliveries to schools to receive their consignments is underway as schools have evidenced. Deliveries to the remaining schools because of supply shortages are well underway and the scheduled plan projects that all schools will receive their Stationery by 15 February 2022. This phase of delivery is a remedial phase addressing partial deliveries and is based on actual school's demand whilst at the same time providing Stationery to all schools in the Province. All schools should have received all stationery consignments by end February 2022. We will send to schools their Top Up textbook consignment schedules from Friday 10 February.

2.4 Classrooms, Water, Sanitation & Schools affected by disaster

The Department is scheduled to provide 300 mobile classrooms to various schools in the province that have admission challenges due to overcrowding or damages in their infrastructure. Some of the schools that will benefit in the programme include the 103 schools that have experienced storm damages between Dec/Jan 2022. Contractors are being appointed to ensue with the repairs from February 2022.

On water provisioning, the Department has partnered with Amatola Water Board for provision of water tank truck (water carting) to supply water in various schools within the province of Eastern Cape on adhoc basis for the period of three years. Schools requiring water carting where municipalities cannot supply, will be provided with water through this contract using local water tankers from within the local municipalities.

The Department continues to deliver sanitation facilities through various programmes. The Sanitation Appropriate for Education (SAFE) is currently having 274 projects under construction whilst the Department is implementing 150 projects in 2021.

2.5 Furniture for Learners and Educators

The Department has quantified school furniture backlogs and requirements and is currently procuring school furniture for learners and educators in identified schools with the available budget of 2021/22. This furniture will be delivered in schools from February once all the processes have been concluded.

2.6 Provision PPE's

The Department has requested the concurrence of Provincial Treasury and the Department of Basic Education to reprioritise funds and make transfer of budget to schools for purchase of sanitisation material/equipment. Once the request is approved, transfers of funds will be made to schools in earnest.

2.7 Payment of EAs & GAs

Verification has been completed and payment effected for the month of January for all qualifying and participating schools. All scheduled and special runs will be used to mop-up payments that may be outstanding. Payment of EAs and GSAs for the month of February and March shall be done through persal.

2.8 National School Nutrition Programme

NSNP funds have been transferred to all schools to ensure that all learners receive meals through the first school term. Schools must resume with full-scale feeding with observation of Covid-19 protocols. Maintenance of high level of hygiene standards is mandatory. Balanced menu and observation of feeding time-tables must be upheld.

2.9 Availability of teachers

The Member of the Executive Council (MEC) of the Eastern Cape Department of Education declared 53 605 educator post basket for 2022, which were distributed by the Head of Department to all public ordinary school in the province. The average educator learner ratio is

1:31, with stability of 83%. Following the distribution of posts, a principal bulletin was issued in January 2022 to ensure that schools have managers. Deputy Principal and HOD posts will be filled by placing additional educators, thereafter, a bulletin may be issued pending the availability of vacancies. PL1 posts will be filled by placing additional educators, thereafter, appointment will be done using the database of unemployed educators following proportional representation: 30% Funza Lushaka, 25% Matthew Goniwe, 25% NSFAS and 20% self-funded. Districts and schools should ensure that the appointments are within their PPN allocation. Circuit Managers must submit weekly reports to the District Director on the progress made in identification and placement of additional educators.

2.10 Filling of vacant Posts

A Principal bulletin has been issued with the closing date of 11 February 2022. As per the 31 December 2021 PERSAL report, there were 460 vacant principal positions, of which 322 have been advertised in the current bulletin. Deputy Principal, Departmental Heads and Post Level 1 vacancies posts will be filled by additional educators after they have been identified by District Task Teams. Additional educators should be moved starting from the 21 January 2022. If some additional educators have not been moved, a mop-up will be undertaken. School principals and Circuit Managers must ensure that the process of identification and placement of additional educators is done in line with Collective Agreement 4 of 2016. Only after additional Deputy Principals and Departmental Heads have been placed, that the Department will issue a bulletin for the vacant posts. If there are Post Level 1 vacancies that cannot be filled by additional educators because of the mismatch with their profiles, the Department will appoint PL1 teachers from the database of unemployed educators. The appointment from the database of unemployed educators should be done using the following proportional representation: 30% Funza Lushaka, 25% Matthew Goniwe, 25% NSFAS and 20% self-funded. Districts and schools should ensure that the appointments are within their PPN allocation. Circuit Managers must submit weekly reports to the District Director on the progress made in identification and placement of additional educators.

2.11 Provision of Non-teaching Staff

The Department has appointed 6 621 non-teaching staff in ordinary public schools. The Department is alive to the fact that the non-teaching staff is not adequate, hence, the development of norms and standards for provision on non-teaching staff to schools.

For special schools, the Department is still developing norms and standards of provision of non-teaching staff. The budget cuts restrict the Department to provide adequate non-teaching staff in both public and special schools.

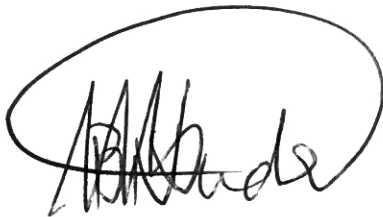
2.12 Provision of School Support Teams & Educator Assistants

The Department is participating in Presidential Youth Employment Initiative (PYEI) as such all schools have received proportional allocations as an interim measure of address support needs of schools and poverty alleviation programme of the government. Through the implementation of PYEI, the Department has provided support staff to all school in the province till the 31 March 2022 with extension depended on availability of budget.

2.13 Scholar Transport

The number of learners as per existing contract was 124 723, which was verified and reduced to 121 031 in 2021. Districts utilised the verified number 121 031 for the reductions process. All Districts were requested to prioritise their schools according to their pressure points to meet the allocated number. A 14.9% reduction was developed by the Provincial Office and each district was allocated a number and each district was advised to use a 14.90 % reduction from the current data of ferried learners per district.

Yours in education services



06 / 02 / 2022

N Mbude (Dr)
Head of Department

Date