



Province of the
EASTERN CAPE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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CIRCULAR NO 51 of 2008

TO: DEPUTY-DIRECTOR GENERAL
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER
CHIEF DIRECTORS
HEAD OFFICE AND DISTRICT DIRECTORS
CHIEF EDUCATION SPECIALISTS
DEPUTY CHIEF / SENIOR EDUCATION SPECIALISTS
PRINCIPALS OF SCHOOLS
SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES
TEACHER UNIONS

FROM: SUPERINTENDENT-GENERAL
MS NV MAHANJANA

SUBJECT: EMERGENCY INTERVENTION ACTION PLAN:
LEARNER ATTAINMENT

DATE: 25TH JULY 2008

1. INTRODUCTION

The Provincial Learner Attainment Improvement strategy (LAIS) as explained in *Circular No 16 of 2008*, dated 17th March 2008 refers.

- In terms of the LAIS mandate, teams comprising Senior Managers from Head Office and District Officials conducted on-site visits to 240 under-performing schools in 6 targeted districts in the province.
- This resulted in the immediate creation of Emergency Intervention Action Plans for the targeted schools. However, the generic findings indicated the need for a provincial intervention strategy as a matter of urgency.

2. STATE OF EMERGENCY

The Provincial Senior Management has declared a *state of emergency* in the Department of Education in respect of the core business i.e. teaching, learning and assessment.

What does this mean for education employees and schools in the Province?

- A ***Back to Basics Campaign*** has been launched with immediate effect.
- A ***moratorium*** has been placed on the convening of workshops, meetings etc. until the 17th October 2008. Special approval has to be obtained directly from the Superintendent General for the convening of any such activity.
- Head Office Senior and Middle Managers have been ***deployed*** to Districts for monitoring and support purposes.
- The major focus of District personnel is ***on-site school support***.
- During this period, there should be a concerted effort not to disrupt teaching, learning and assessment activities.
- Full commitment by all employees is expected for the implementation of the Emergency Intervention Action Plan.

3. PROVINCIAL INTERVENTION ACTION PLAN

- Several Provincial engagements led to the adoption of the "***Emergency Intervention Action Plan***" on the 2nd July 2008, focusing on improving learner attainment.
- The Provincial Plan has ***9 Key Intervention Areas*** and makes provision for the following 5 aspects: *Item, Findings, Corrective Action, Time-frame and Responsibility* which categorise the generic findings of the school visits.
- The Provincial Plan has been customised by each of the 23 districts in terms of the needs of its schools and is available on request.
- Each school is expected to develop a ***Comprehensive School Improvement Plan*** reflecting the 9 Key Intervention Areas of the Provincial Emergency Intervention Action Plan.

3.1 Key Intervention Areas for District and School Plans:

The 9 Key Intervention Areas are:

- 1. BACK TO BASICS: MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION**
- 2. GOVERNANCE ISSUES**
- 3. ON-SITE SCHOOL MONITORING AND SUPPORT**
- 4. NCS IMPLEMENTATION**
- 5. LEARNER SUPPORT PROGRAMMES**
- 6. HUMAN RESOURCES**
- 7. INFRASTRUCTURE PROBLEMS**
- 8. TEACHING RESOURCES AND PHYSICAL FACILITIES**
- 9. ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEMS AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

3.2 Back-to-Basics Campaign: Emergency Intervention Action Plan

The Back to Basics Campaign adopted by the Province emphasises the following issues for the 9 Key Intervention Areas.

<p>1. MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATION:</p> <p><i>General non-compliance with basic policy imperatives and requirements for basic school functionality</i></p> <p>1.1 Non-adherence to school times / Working day 1.2 Time Tabling as per NCS/prescribed Instructional hours 1.3 Monitoring and Control Measures for Teacher & Learner Attendance 1.4 Ineffective School Leadership / SMT: inadequate supervision and monitoring of Teaching and Learning. 1.5 Policy implementation neglect e.g. IQMS, SIP (School Improvement Plans), Provincial Circulars and Assessment Instructions, etc.</p>	<p>2. GOVERNANCE ISSUES:</p> <p><i>Non functioning/ineffective SGB sub-committees – abuse of authority or inability to invoke authority</i></p> <p>2.1 Absence of Policy framework for schools: Regulation of all operations 2.2 SGB functionality: Non functioning / ineffective SGB sub-committees 2.3 Improper utilization of NSF allocation: ineffective financial management 2.4 Inadequate focus on School Safety 2.5 Lack of parental involvement in school matters</p>
<p>3. ON-SITE SCHOOL MONITORING AND SUPPORT:</p> <p><i>District Based Support Teams not working in an Integrated approach in delivery of education support programs for schools</i></p> <p>3.1 Lack of a focused and meaningful support by Head Office: Inadequate monitoring of districts 3.2 Ineffective/inadequate monitoring and support to schools by districts 3.3 Lack of Integrated Action Planning and implementation at district level: minimal impact on schools 3.4 Transport Constraints of district officials: negative impact on school support</p>	<p>4. NCS IMPLEMENTATION:</p> <p><i>NCS in all schools (GET and FET) not being adequately implemented. Basic national policy mandates in respect of teaching, learning and assessment are not being applied, Impacting negatively on learner attainment</i></p> <p>4.1 Adherence to NCS policy documents and guidelines: non-compliance i.r.o National policies, Provincial Curriculum Guidelines, Assessment Instructions, etc. 4.2 Lack of effective planning: - Learning Programmes - Work schedules - Lesson plans 4.3 Inadequate maintaining and development of Teacher and Learner portfolios: Lack of supervision/monitoring by SMT 4.4 Assessment, reporting progression and promotion:</p>

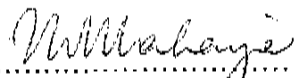
<p>5. LEARNER SUPPORT PROGRAMMES:</p> <p><i>General lack of positive attitude amongst learners with many being demotivated. There is little or no evidence of learner motivation and support programmes.</i></p> <p>5.1 Extra-tuition before school, after school, during weekends and holidays: lack of alignment with Subject Improvement Plan.</p> <p>5.2 Absence of a clear strategy for motivation of learners: Need for an organised programme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SBA (School Based Assessment), • CASS (Continuous Assessment) etc not in line with minimum NCS prescriptions. Incorrect promotion of learners <p>4.5 Teacher orientation in the NCS: Untrained teachers and teaching of new subjects/ Learning areas</p> <p>4.6 Addressing gaps between GET and FET learners: GET schools and content/knowledge gaps. No planning between FET and GET feeder schools.</p> <p>4.7 Lack of/inactivity i.r.o subject/learning area Committees at school/cluster/circuit levels</p> <p>4.8 School Subject Improvement Plans: Little or no evidence of subject/learning area strategy. Need for a focused MIP (Matric Improvement Plan) per subject.</p>
<p>6. HUMAN RESOURCES:</p> <p><i>Inadequate supply of teaching and non-teaching staff for effective schooling.</i></p> <p>6.1 Educator provisioning challenges: vacancies, under-qualified teachers, displaced teachers, etc.</p> <p>6.2 Non-Teaching Staff: shortage of administrative and support staff at schools.</p> <p>6.3 Leave management: Extended incapacity leave with no replacement, high absentee rate, etc.</p>	<p>7. INFRASTRUCTURE PROBLEMS:</p> <p><i>Learners and teachers are exposed to inhabitable physical conditions and absence of teaching and learning facilities.</i></p> <p>7.1 Inadequate provision of classrooms: overcrowding and combined classes</p> <p>7.2 Dilapidated condition of classrooms</p> <p>7.3 Lack of provision of water and sanitation: poor health conditions</p> <p>7.4 Insufficient/ineffective educational facilities such as science laboratories, computer laboratories and libraries</p> <p>7.5 Lack of security and risks posed to teachers/learners</p> <p>7.6 Inadequate supply/poor conditions of school equipment and assets</p> <p>7.7 Absence of playgrounds and equipment, sporting/extra-curricular facilities, etc</p>

<p>8. TEACHING RESOURCES AND PHYSICAL FACILITIES:</p> <p><i>Serious challenges have been identified in respect of resources and facilities which are having a negative on learner attainment. LTSM, especially Literature, Specialized Subject/Learning area equipment, Teaching aids and Furniture are areas of priority concern.</i></p> <p>8.1 Inadequate supply and poor condition of furniture: desks, chairs, cupboards, etc.</p> <p>8.2 Lack of specialized learning and teaching equipment: Maths, Science, Technology, IT, etc.</p> <p>8.3 Provision and use of teaching aids/ resources for quality learning</p>	<p>9. ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEMS AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES:</p> <p><i>Lack of accountability on principals to cause teaching and learning to take place in schools</i></p> <p>9.1 Ineffective Pay-Point Management and staff control</p> <p>9.2 Disciplinary procedures: non-Implementation of disciplinary action</p> <p>9.3 Inadequate monitoring support of schools by district teams</p> <p>9.4 Accountability structures: Lack of systems at district/school levels</p> <p>9.5 Monitoring and reporting: Limited monitoring and reporting on organisational performance by schools and districts.</p>
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CONCLUSION

The Province of the Eastern Cape is determined to address the challenge of poor learner performance at all levels. In particular, there is a need for a special focus on the current Grade 12 learners who, for the first time, will be writing the National Senior Certificate based on the National Curriculum Statement. It is crucial that all officials of the Department and school-based personnel subscribe fully to the declaration of the state of emergency. More importantly, it is essential that the Provincial Intervention Action Plan is fully operationalised at District and individual school levels. It is only through the collective efforts, sacrifices and commitment of all stakeholders in the Province that Learner Attainment can be improved and our children afforded the opportunity of a brighter future.

Yours in Quality Education


 MS. N.V. MAHANJANA
 SUPERINTENDENT-GENERAL