



SAOU

**Suid-Afrikaanse Onderwysersunie
South African Teachers' Union**

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AGREEMENT ON THE OCCUPATIONAL SPECIFIC DISPENSATION FOR EDUCATORS

The long awaited agreement on the Occupational Specific Dispensation (OSD) for Educators was agreed to on Wednesday, 2 April 2008 by all the educator unions and the employer as parties to the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC). This agreement results from negotiations that took place over a period of several months.

During the negotiations it was noticeable how the different educator unions co-operated in a positive atmosphere and to what extent they agreed on matters that had an impact on South African educators. Furthermore there was consensus on what had to be included in the agreement. The employer's willingness to consider proposals made by the unions and the cooperation shown by them in an attempt to reach an agreement is highly appreciated. The fact that the OSD was not referred back to the PSCBC illustrates the serious light in which both employer and unions regarded the matter.

A salient aspect of the agreement is that it makes provision for defining the principles underlying the OSD. Further attention can now be given to the processes required for the extension of the above-mentioned principles. This process must be finalised by 30 June 2008.

Amongst others, the OSD makes provision for –

- a minimum salary adjustment of 4% for all educators (school and office-based). Some educators will, due to the translation to new tables and other factors, receive an increase of more than 5%. The adjustments are applicable as from 1 January 2008 and educators can soon expect to receive payments due to them;
- the upward extension of the salary scales for each post level with maxima up to 40% to 89% higher than the present scales. In this regard cognisance must be taken that it might take up to 20 years to reach the maxima and that this process will be based on salary and accelerated salary progression;
- three occupational streams in education. During their careers educators will be able to choose from the following streams: General Classroom, Specialist Educator or Education Management;
- the introduction of two classroom based specialist posts i.e. that of Teaching and Learning Specialist and Senior Teaching and Learning Specialist;
- the improvement of the starting salary of newly qualified educators. The aim is to draw more student teachers to the profession;
- School Principals and Deputy Principals to form part part of the Education Management Service in future. Incumbents of these posts will be subject to performance agreements as generally



applicable to the rest of the public service. They will also, within the applicable guidelines, be able to structure their own salary packages;

- the retention of the present posts of Senior Educator and Master Educator by present incumbents;
- the OSD for psychologists and therapists employed in education to be investigated.

During the negotiation process the SAOU played a leading role and took the initiative in the process. The SAOU is certain that there will be an improvement in the career opportunity of educators because of the OSD. It is important to note that the conclusion of this agreement provides for a framework and that intensive negotiations will still be required during the next three months in order to finalise the OSD.

End of statement

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