



# SAOU

DIE VERANDERING IN ONDERWYS  
THE CHANGE IN EDUCATION

## 2021 REOPENING OF SCHOOLS WHAT SHOULD SCHOOLS KNOW?

**DRAFT CONSOLIDATED DIRECTIONS**

SAOU News Flash No 3 of 2021

27 January 2021

WANT ONS GEE OM – BECAUSE WE CARE

# Focus and approach

- Received numerous questions – will attempt to address in PP
- Principal/ SMT and Covid compliance officer – accept responsibility
- Any claims for damages – will knock on door of principal/ SMT
- Test will be – **Was there compliance with directions and SOP?**
- If not, the employee will be deemed to be on a frolic of his/her own.  
Thus, no vicarious liability for employer!



**WHY DO WE DO THIS?**

**#BECAUSE WE CARE!**

# NEED FOR CONSOLIDATED DIRECTIONS

- Perception exists that schools may resume to the traditional time tables, i.e. prior to 15 March 2020
  - **Definitely not so!**
- Directions, dated 22 January 2021 strengthened the perception, i.e. that *all learners* may return
- **Reality** is that the only matter that has changed, is that all public schools will reopen as follows (see last published directions)
  - 25 January 2021: SMTs and other support staff
  - 1 February 2021: Educators
  - 1 February 2021: Independent schools
  - 15 February 2021: All learners
- **NB:** All other restrictions that applied during last term of 2020 still apply



# What are the sources to determine what applies?

Final  
consolidated  
directions  
expected prior to  
15 February 2021

## GOVERNMENT NOTICE

DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION

NO. \_\_\_\_\_ 2021

DISASTER MANAGEMENT ACT, 2002

DIRECTIONS ISSUED IN TERMS OF REGULATION 4(3) OF THE REGULATIONS MADE UNDER THE DISASTER MANAGEMENT ACT, 2002 (ACT NO. 57 OF 2002) REGARDING THE RE-OPENING OF SCHOOLS AND MEASURES TO ADDRESS, PREVENT AND COMBAT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 IN THE NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION, ALL PROVINCIAL DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION, ALL EDUCATION DISTRICT OFFICES AND ALL SCHOOLS IN THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

### DRAFT CONSOLIDATED DIRECTIONS FOR BASIC EDUCATION

I, Angelina ~~Matsie~~ Motshekga, Minister of Basic Education, in terms of regulation 4(3)(b) of the Regulations made under the Disaster Management Act, 2002 (Act No. 57 of 2002), as published under Government Notice No. R.480, in Government Gazette No. 43258 of 29 April 2020, as amended, hereby issue the Directions in the schedule regarding the re-opening of schools and measures to address, prevent and combat the spread of COVID-19 in the National Department of Basic Education, and all Provincial Departments of Education, all education district offices and all schools in the Republic of South Africa.

MRS AM MOTSHEKGA, MP

MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION

DATE:

## Standard Operating Procedure

for the containment and  
management of COVID-19 for  
schools and school communities  
(SEPTEMBER 2020)

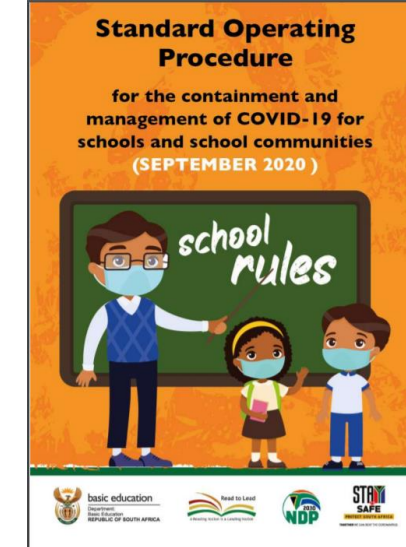


basic education  
Department:  
Basic Education  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



# CONSOLIDATED DIRECTIONS

- SAOU News Flash 3/21 – requested comment from members = **mandate**
- Goal is to consolidate all directions since the first closure of schools on 18 March 2020
- Reason – directions have been amended on numerous occasions – uncertainty and confusion
- SAOU requested consolidation of directions to provide assistance to schools
- **NB:** Note that directions specifically refer to SOPs
- Directions will apply to –
  - All public schools
  - Hostels
  - Pre-school facilities
  - After school facilities
  - Learners
  - SGBs



# DRAFT CONSOLIDATED DIRECTIONS: RE-EMPHASIS

- Only schools that comply may open – **declaration** by principal and SGB
- Aftercare facilities are allowed to re-open
- Pre-school facilities –
  - ito DSDW and court judgement – may continue to operate
  - Grade R –
    - be cautious until 15 Febr
    - Formally part of school or pre-school?



# SCHOOL ATTENDANCE: LEARNERS

- See 2 August 2020 directions
- Parent, care giver or designated family member may prefer not to send learner to school ito
  - Learner's medical condition
  - Anxiety or fear – e.g. for learner or family member older than 60
  - Prefer online platform/ virtual classes provided by independent institution or school's own
  - Applied for home education – then must comply with sect 51 of SASA
- **Process of application for exemption**
  - Ito Sect 4 of SASA to HOD
  - Learners who qualified during 2020 – need not re-apply
  - Can be full or partial exemption for **duration of Covid-19**
    - **NB:** Does not apply irt school's own online platform – but application via school/ SGB is advised
  - See Sect 3 of SASA: Compulsory school going age (7-15 yrs) –
    - **+15 yrs** - if registered, follow same procedure
  - Parent, care giver or designated family member must take responsibility for schooling of learner
  - School must consult with parent, etc irt LTSM, collection of learning material and assessment
  - Learner who is deregistered, will have to reapply for admission and adhere to admission requirements
  - Appeal by parent against HOD decision to not exempt – appeal to MEC
- **LSEN schools and ordinary schools – uniform application**





# ATTENDANCE: EDUCATORS

- Attendance by educators with **comorbidities and underlying medical conditions**
- ELRC Collective Agreement 1/20 has not been renewed yet
- Interim source for handling – **DBE Circular 1/21**

## 10. Consequently, the following measures shall apply for educators with comorbidities:

- 11.1 Be required to submit a recent medical report (Not older than one month) from the treating doctor indicating that he/she is at risk of being affected by COVID-19 due to his/her medical condition;
- 11.2 Be required to agree with the Principal/Manager on how such comorbidity or underlying medical condition shall be accommodated whilst taking into consideration the operational requirements of a school;
- 11.3 Be required to agree with the Principal/Manager on the arrangements to either work from home or for special workplace arrangements to be made to accommodate him/her;
- 11.4 The Principal/Manager shall be required to complete the Individual Risk Assessment Form for all the vulnerable employees due to Covid-19, indicating which work options have been agreed upon;
- 11.5 The Educator and the Principal / Manager shall be required to comply with the relevant procedures and measures as determined by the employing Provincial Education Department.
- 11.6 Where the Principal/Manager has a comorbidity or an underlying medical condition, the above measures shall be applicable between the affected Principal/Manager and the relevant District or Circuit Manager.

## 12. Provincial Departments of Education together with Districts and schools are to ensure that all entry-level educator posts are filled at all times and that there is no

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class without an educator. In cases where substitutes are to be appointed where educators are ill, or where there is a vacancy, this is to be done immediately by consulting the available resources such as the Funza Lushaka database or the database on unemployed educators which are available at both provincial and national level.

## 13. All the COVID-19 health, hygiene and safety measures must be implemented equally outside of the work environment as well. All staff members must take all reasonable precautions to prevent acquiring the viral infection to protect the school/work environment and the health of everyone on the premises.

## 14. Schools are reminded that educators must take extra care in staff rooms by maintaining a maximum of 50% occupancy at all times, social distancing is maintained, wearing of masks and the availability and use of hand sanitisers are abided to. Where possible convergence of Educators in Staff Rooms and or common areas that are indoors should be avoided.



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TO:

HEADS OF PROVINCIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS  
HEADS OF PROVINCIAL HUMAN RESOURCES SECTIONS  
DISTRICT DIRECTORS  
CIRCUIT MANAGERS  
AREA MANAGERS  
SCHOOL PRINCIPALS  
SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES (SGBs)  
SCHOOL BASED EDUCATORS

CIRCULAR NO 01 OF 2021

THE RETURN OF EDUCATORS AND SUPPORT STAFF TO SCHOOLS FOR THE  
2021 ACADEMIC YEAR AMIDST COVID-19 PANDEMIC

1. As the Department of Basic Education (DBE) welcomes all educators, support staff and learners back in our schools for the 2021 academic year, the Department is cognisant of the rising COVID-19 infections in the country, which may bring a lot of anxiety to educators as they return to schools.

**“Be required to agree...”**

**NB:** Compliance with just administrative justice



# DRAFT CONSOLIDATED DIRECTIONS: RE-EMPHASIS

- Exemption and status of learner

- Remains a registered learner at school
- Any learner must be marked absent when learner is not physically present at school
- Detailed records of following are NB:
  - Daily attendance
  - Learners unable to attend
  - Exemptions

- LSEN learners

- Face shields for blind learners
- Cloth masks for low vision learners, teachers and support staff
- Schools for the deaf: Face shields for teachers, learners, and support staff



# HOSTELS

- May be permitted to open - subject to **declaration by principal and SGB**
- If it exceeds capacity its social distancing requirements – “will not be required to close in its entirety” – must make provision for alternatives – including reverting to PDE
- SOP:
  - Group studying – subject to 1m
  - Not socialise in rooms
  - Staggered mealtimes may be considered (para 19.16)
  - Para 19.18: No sharing of utensils



# SPORT AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

- Subject to safety measures the following may resume without spectators–
  - Non-contact sport training and matches as well as sport related activities
  - Arts and culture school-based activities
  - But, all inter-school activities are suspended under adjusted Level 3 lockdown.
- Safety measures:
  - Number of persons in the sporting venues, change rooms or training area – never +50% of the capacity
  - Face masks must be worn by all persons entering the sporting venues, change rooms or training area, except when participating in training or matches;
  - Sufficient quantities of hand sanitizers(70% alcohol content) available for use by all
  - Facilities for washing of hands with soap and water;
  - All windows and doors must remain open, where feasible, to ensure adequate ventilation;
  - Social distancing must be maintained at all times to SOP – 1m
  - No sharing of water bottles, energy drinks and other drinks



# SPORT AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

- **Contact sport:**

Contact sport training may resume: Provided that all social distancing, hygiene and safety measures are observed and that there is no physical contact between participants during training.

- **Non-contact sport - Competitions/ interschool:** National championships and tournaments for non-contact sport that require learners to travel to other schools or provinces is suspended under adjusted level 3 lockdown



# SPORT AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

## Arts & culture

- May resume subject to strict adherence to all social distancing, hygiene and safety measures,
  - Oral history, spelling bee, moot court, speech contests, debates and school clubs,
  - Solo vocal rehearsals and practice
  - Co-curricular and enrichment programmes

## BUT

- Choir practise or rehearsals, choir competitions, choir performances and inter-school choir are suspended under adjusted level 3 lockdown.



# Other important matters

- **Permits**

- Legitimate reason why curfew compliance is not possible – work related
- Principal will be entitled to issue

- **PPE**

- Principal must request PDE to supply
- Timeous
- “Paper trail” is NB

- **Workplace plan** for every school, hostel, pre-school, after-school

- Sets out health protocols, compliance by staff and who is compliance officer

- **Symptom screening**

- Remains important
- Reporting line if someone presents symptoms

- **COIDA**

- If work related
- Infected person or family may lodge a claim
- **NB: Risk for principal – vicarious liability**

- **Daily sanitising** of surfaces remain important



# Social distancing and timetable models

- **Social distance**: Every school, hostel or office must comply with the social distancing requirements as prescribed in the Regulations, DBE Standard Operating Procedures and DBE Guidelines.
- **Timetable models**: Subject to social distancing requirements, schools may consider and apply any of following available timetable models suitable for their context and functionality:
  - Daily and weekly rotation;
  - Bi-weekly rotation;
  - traditional and daily; or
  - a hybrid of the latter.
- Subject social distancing, schools with **large enough facilities** do not have to change their traditional and daily timetable models, and may continue to operate in accordance with those timetable models.
- Subject to social distancing, a school that has a **large enough facility** may accommodate more than 50 learners, officials and parents in that facility at a time, strictly for educational purposes

## Platooning

Increasing evidence – less effective  
aro exhaustion to teachers





# Social distancing and timetable models

Requirement is 1m

## Objective questions:

1. Is distance 1m?
2. Is their relaxation in directions or SOP for screens between learners?



## SOP

### PHYSICAL DISTANCING

11.1 Schools should work on the practicality of implementing physical distancing of 1 metre in primary and secondary schools per class.

11.2 SMTs and SGBs **must ensure** that the requirements of social distancing are met. If this is not possible, **appropriate adjustments must** be made to enable schools **to adhere** to social distancing requirements.

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# Standard Operating Procedure

for the containment and  
management of **COVID-19** for  
schools and school communities  
(SEPTEMBER 2020)



basic education  
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# DBE SOP

- Who must comply?
  - All public schools (ordinary & LSEN)
  - All learners, educators, support staff officials, parents and SGBs
- Gatherings of +50 must be avoided
- Sanitizers (60% alcohol basis) but COGTA and DBE directions require 70%
- High touch areas – must be cleaned more often than just daily
- School halls may only be used for education related activities
- Class based meeting with parents – one parent p/learner
- Trash/ dustbins – disposed daily
- Advocacy programme for learners and parents
- Queues – 1m social distancing
- Group activities / excursions are suspended



# DBE SOP

- Special care for **LSEN learners** – they are at greater risk
- Paras 10.2 and 11.1 : **Social distance = 1m** physical distance in primary and secondary schools
  - *PHYSICAL DISTANCING*
  - *11.1 Schools should work on the practicality of implementing physical distancing of 1 metre in primary and secondary schools per class.*
  - *11.2 SMTs and SGBs **must ensure** that the requirements of social distancing are met. If this is not possible, appropriate **adjustments must be made** to enable schools to adhere to social distancing requirements.*
- **Face mask break (13.3):** take a “face mask break” (5 –15 minutes) every two hours during the school day where they (learners) can safely **remove** their masks **outdoors** when a distance of at least **1.5 meter** from other people is maintained.
- **Infection of staff member (para 16):**
  - If during **daily** screening – symptoms exhibited
  - Seek medical assessment and medical certificate
  - Return to work **10 days after** positive medical test
  - Apply for sick leave
- **NB: Para 16 (Infections):** Make careful study of 5 scenarios



# DBE SOP

- Learners: Identification of positive Covid-19 case
  - Report
  - School closure: **Only** HOD
  - Rationale for actions – transparent and coherent
- General: Identification of positive case
  - Staff and learners: Medical certificate - 10 days and no symptoms
  - Staff: Apply for sick leave
  - Cluster infection (25% of class) - may be appropriate to temporarily close class – but, get advice from PDE
  - **Para 18.4:** *Closure of an entire school is an extreme measure that should be carefully considered and can only be made by the head of department in discussion with DoH representative, prior to implementation.*



# In conclusion

- Principal and SMT are responsible officials
- In cases of non-compliance – first knock on the door (e.g. Parktown Boys)
- Rather err on the side of caution



**WHY DO WE DO THIS?**

**#BECAUSE WE CARE!**



# Thank you



# SAOU

DIE VERANDERING IN ONDERWYS  
THE CHANGE IN EDUCATION

**REMEMBER! WE CARE!**