

THE STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT, OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING OF THE DISTRICT- BASED SUPPORT TEAMS (DBST)



NOVEMBER 2024



basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



**THE STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR THE
ESTABLISHMENT, OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT AND CAPACITY
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FOREWORD BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL



The African Children's Charter lifts the importance of education in enhancing a child's potential while asserting that the lack of education is a life sentence of poverty and exclusion. This means that the right to education is one of the most fundamental rights in the lives of all children, including children with special needs and those experiencing barriers to learning and development.

Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) guarantees the respect and protection of the right of children with special needs to equitable quality education. For people with special needs, the right to education is fundamental as it directly impacts the successful enjoyment of all other rights protected by the UNCRPD.

The Basic Education Sector must uphold, respect and protect the right to a basic education, as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. Therefore, I am pleased to introduce the Standard Operating Procedures for the Establishment, Operational Management, and Capacity Building of the District-Based Support Teams to all officials, schools, educators, learners, parents, and education stakeholders.

Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education; Building an Inclusive and Training Systems, 2001, contends that District-Based Support Teams shall provide a full range of educational support services, such as professional development in curriculum and assessment to School-Based Support Teams.

The Conceptual and Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of Inclusive Education: District-Based Support Teams, 2005, guides on the integrated professional support services at the district level to identify and address barriers to learning and promote effective teaching and learning in education institutions, including early childhood centres, schools, further education in colleges, and adult learning centres.

The purpose of the Standard Operating Procedures is to guide schools, districts, and Provincial Education Departments on the establishment, composition, roles and functioning of District-Based Support Teams. District-Based Support Teams must ensure that every learner at the school level receives a high-quality education regardless of their background or abilities. The ultimate goal is to create an inclusive education system that provides equal opportunities for all learners, especially those with special education needs, to access quality education and reach their potential. Provincial education departments must establish and maintain functional District-Based Support Teams in all education districts, in line with these Standard Operating Procedures.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Mh Mveli', written over a light blue circular watermark.

MR MH MWELI

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

DATE: 05/02/2025

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ACRONYMS

CSTL	Care and Support for Teaching and Learning
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CBST	Circuit-Based Support Team
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DBST	District-Based Support Team
IE	Inclusive Education
EWP 6	Education White Paper 6
ISP	Individual Support Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
LSA	Learner Support Agent
PAM	Personnel Administrative measures
PED	Provincial Education Department
QLTC	Quality Learning and Teaching Campaign
QMS	Quality Management System
SASA	South African Schools Act 84 of 1996
SBST	School-Based Support Team
SGB	School Governing Body
SIAS	Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SMT	Senior Management Team
SNA	Support Needs Assessment
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SSRC	Special School Resource Centre

DEFINITIONS

Barriers to learning – Refer to difficulties within the education system, the learning site, or learners themselves that prevent or hinder access to learning and development.

District-based Support Team (DBST) – A management structure at the district level responsible for coordinating and promoting inclusive education through training, curriculum delivery, distribution of resources, infrastructure development, and identification, assessment and addressing of barriers to learning. The DBST must provide leadership and general management to ensure that schools within an education district are inclusive centres of learning, care and support.

Education circuit – is an area of an education district which is demarcated by an MEC for administrative purposes. It is the second-level administrative sub-division of a Provincial Education Department (PED) depending on the context, the term “circuit” is used to describe either the geographic area or the administrative unit.

Individual Support Plan – A plan designed for learners who need additional support or expanded opportunities, developed by teachers in consultation with the parents and the School-Based Support Team.

Reasonable accommodation means necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments, not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure that persons with disabilities enjoy or exercise equally with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

School-Based Support Teams (SBSTs) – Teams established by all public ordinary and special schools as a school-level support mechanism, whose primary function is to put coordinated school, learner and teacher support in place to ensure that the school becomes an inclusive centre of learning, care and support. This team is the same as an Institution-level Support Team.

Special Schools Resource Centres (SSRCs) – Special schools are equipped to accommodate learners who need access to high-intensity educational support programmes and services and provide support services to ordinary public schools.

Support Needs Assessment (SNA) – Process of determining the additional support provision that a learner needs. The process is guided by the various sections of the SNA forms contained in the Policy on SIAS.

SECTION A

1. Introduction

South African schools reflect the rich diversity of our country. Our classrooms comprise learners from different races, genders, sexes, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origins, colour, sexual orientations, ages, disability, religions, consciences, beliefs, cultures, languages, and birth. In recognition of the right of every child to an equitable, inclusive, and quality education, as enshrined in our Constitution, South Africa has committed to an inclusive education system. It is acknowledged that this system 'ensures full participation and access to quality learning opportunities for all children, young people and adults, respecting and valuing diversity, and eliminating all forms of discrimination in and through education'¹.

In our schools, teachers and learners require support to ensure quality teaching and learning for all. Support takes many forms. The Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) defines support as including 'all activities in a school which increase its capacity to respond to diversity'². Coordinating support provision at both the school and district levels is critical. For this reason, both Education White Paper 6 (EWP6) and the Policy on SIAS mandate that every education district establish a District-Based Support Team (DBST).

2. Purpose and objectives of the SOPs

These Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) guide schools, districts, and Provincial Education Departments (PEDs) on the establishment, composition, role, and functioning of DBSTs. The objective is to ensure standardised operating procedures of this structure across all districts and provinces. These Standard Operating Procedures will be reviewed every five years or when necessary.

3. Legislative and Policy Mandates

These SOPs align with the provisions of the existing regulatory framework for education in South Africa and should be read in conjunction with the following treatise, laws and policies:

3.1 National Instruments

- (a) Constitution of South Africa (Act No. 108 of 1996)
- (b) South African Schools Act (Act No. 84 of 1996)
- (c) Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (2001)
- (d) Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (2014)
- (e) Education White Paper 5 on Early Childhood Development (2001)
- (f) Children's Act (Act No. 38 of 2005) as amended
- (g) The National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement, Gr R–12 (2011)
- (h) Integrated School Health Policy (2012)
- (i) Handbook for the Provision of an Integrated Package for Care and Support for Learners in South African Schools (2014)
- (j) School Nutrition Policy (2013)
- (k) Minimum Uniform Norms and Standards for Public School Infrastructure (2013)

1 UNESCO, Commitment to Equity and Inclusion in Education, International Forum on Inclusion and Equity in Education, Cali, Colombia (2019).

2 Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support Policy, DBE, 2014, Page 15.

- (l) Mental Health Care Act, Act 17 of 2002
- (m) Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 (Act No. 2 of 2000)
- (n) Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, 2000 (PEPUDA or the Equality Act, Act No. 4 of 2000).
- (o) Conceptual and Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of Inclusive Education: District-Based Support Teams (2005)
- (p) Policy on the Organisation, Roles and Responsibilities of Education Districts (2013)
- (q) Guidelines to Ensure Quality Education and Support in Special Schools and Special Schools Resource Centres (2014)
- (r) National Policy on HIV, STIs, and TB for Learners, Educators, School Support Staff and Officials in all Primary and Secondary Schools in the Basic Education Sector (2017)
- (s) Protocol for the Management and Reporting of Sexual Abuse and Harassment in Schools (2019)
- (t) Personnel Administrative Measures, 4 No. 46879 Government Gazette, 9 September 2022.
- (u) National Mental Health Policy Framework and Strategic Plan (2023-2030)
- (v) SOPs for COVID-19
- (w) Basic Education Laws Amendment Act (Act No. 32 of 2024)
- (x) Guidelines for Full Service / Inclusive Schools (2010)
- (y) Child Justice Act (Act No.75 of 2008)

3.2 Regional Instruments

- a) The Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL) Framework (2008)

3.3 International Instruments

- b) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006), specifically Article 24
- c) Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), specifically Article 23

4. Guiding Principles

These SOPs have been developed under the Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL) Framework ten priority areas (2008, pg.30) and in alignment with the Policy on SIAS (2014, pg. 25). These include the guiding principles outlined in the Policy on SIAS, as outlined below.

4.1 Organising principles

- 4.1.1 The organising principle for the Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support process is that every child should have the right to receive quality basic education and support within their local community.
- 4.1.2 Every learner has a right to receive reasonable accommodation in an inclusive setting.
- 4.1.3 Decisions about the child should always be in their best interests.

4.2 Principles of support

- 4.2.1 Support includes all activities in a school which increase its capacity to respond to diversity. Providing support to individuals is only one way of making learning contexts and lessons accessible to all learners.
- 4.2.2 Support also occurs when schools review their culture, policies, and practices to determine the extent to which they are inclusive centres of learning, care, and support.
- 4.2.3 Support must focus broadly on the learning and teaching process by identifying and addressing learner, teacher and school needs.
- 4.2.4 A support package for a learner may consist of a range of additional support provisions that may not be equal in respect of their level of intensity.
- 4.2.5 Support can be provided along a continuum of intensity ranging from low to moderate to high.
- 4.2.6 Five specific support provision areas are identified:
 - 4.2.6.1 Specialist support staff
 - 4.2.6.2 Assistive devices, specialised equipment and teaching and learning support materials
 - 4.2.6.3 Curriculum differentiation to meet the individual needs of learners
 - 4.2.6.4 Initial and ongoing training, orientation, mentorship and guidance
 - 4.2.6.5 Environmental access (once-off and not necessarily ongoing).
- 4.2.7 The nature and extent of the support needed to address the barrier are determined by evaluating the following:
 - 4.2.7.1 Resources or support available to the learner and the school
 - 4.2.7.2 Additional support that is still required
 - 4.2.7.3 Capacity and resources within the province or district that could reasonably be made available at the school level through various means.

4.3 Principles of assessment

- 4.3.1 Teachers, parents and learners need to be centrally involved in the process.
- 4.3.2 Assessment must be multi-dimensional or systemic, located within the framework of barriers experienced at the individual (learner and teacher), curriculum, school, family, community and social context levels.
- 4.3.3 Assessment procedures need to be guided by the principle of respect for all concerned.
- 4.3.4 The purpose of the assessment should be clear and open.
- 4.3.5 Assessment needs to be appropriate and relevant to the realities and context of the person or school concerned.
- 4.3.6 Assessment must be fair, bias-free, and sensitive to gender, race, cultural background, and ability.
- 4.3.7 Assessment needs to identify barriers to learning to improve the teaching and learning process.
- 4.3.8 Assessment needs to be a continuous process.

4.4 Guiding Principles for Decision-Making

- 4.4.1 Access to additional support, irrespective of the intensity range, is not site-restricted.
- 4.4.2 Placement of a learner in a specialised setting to access support provisions is a last resort and should not be considered permanent.
- 4.4.3 Review processes to consider reintegration into an ordinary school should continually be conducted.

5. Scope

- 5.1 These SOPs apply to all education districts across the country. Every education district must establish a DBST and ensure its operating procedures align with these SOPs.**
- 5.2 Nothing prohibits a DBST from doing more than is prescribed in these SOPs. For example, a DBST may elect to meet regularly to coordinate support in large districts more effectively.**
- 5.3 Some PEDs may also opt to have CBST where cases are discussed before they are sent to DBST. The competencies of CBST as related to the SIAS process as outlined in the Policy on SIAS (2014, pg. 17) must be:**
- 5.3.1 to respond to requests for assistance from SBSTs.
 - 5.3.2 to assess eligibility of requests made by SBST by gathering any additional information and/or administering relevant assessments, conducting interviews and/or site visits.
 - 5.3.3 to provide direction in respect of any concessions, accommodations, additional strategies, programmes, services and resources that will enhance the school-based support plan.
 - 5.3.4 to identify learners for outplacement into specialised settings, e.g. special schools, to access specialised support services attached to ordinary or full-service schools or to access high-level outreach support.

6. Structure of the SOPs

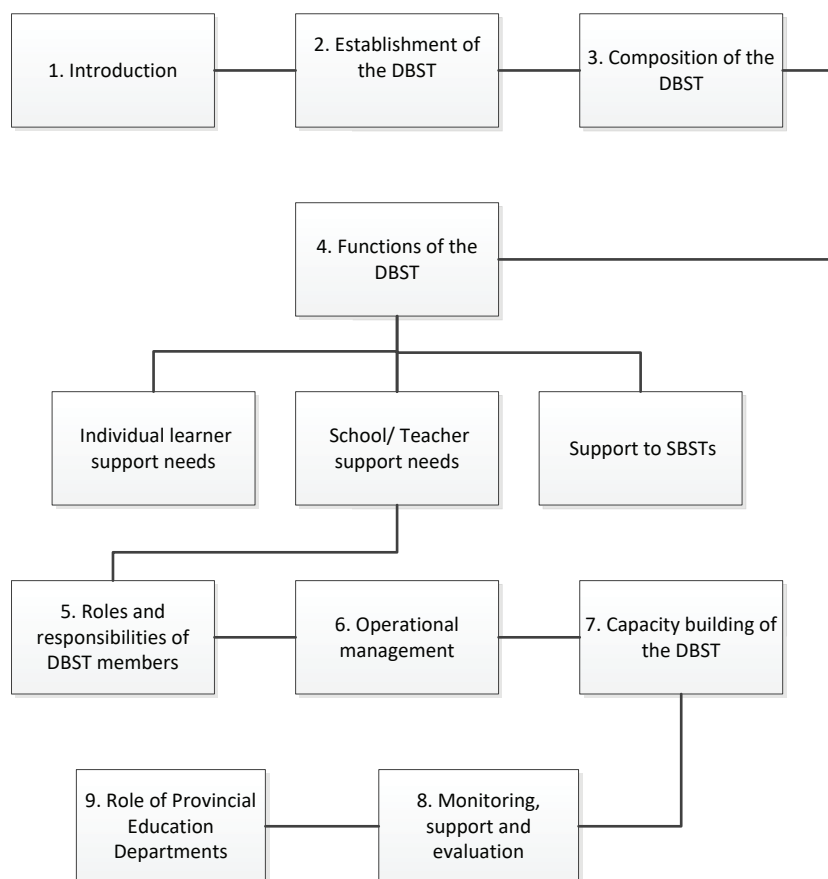


Figure 7: Structure of the SOP

SECTION B

1. Introduction

- 1.1 It is acknowledged that one of the keys to reducing barriers to learning within education lies in a strengthened education support service.
- 1.2 Establishing and optimal functioning of District-Based Support Teams (DBST) is critical to strengthening coordinated and integrated support provisioning. The DBST is described in the Policy on SIAS as:
- 1.3 A management structure at the district level, the responsibility of which is to coordinate and promote inclusive education through training; curriculum delivery; distribution of resources; infrastructure development; identification, assessment, and addressing of barriers to learning. The DBST must provide leadership and general management to ensure that schools within the district are inclusive centres of learning, care and support³.
- 1.4 The DBST must coordinate integrated professional support services at the district level.
- 1.5 DBSTs must “focus particularly on how the historically fragmented support provided to schools, colleges, early childhood, and adult learning centres can be better coordinated so that a more holistic and integrated approach to support can be realised”⁴.

2. Establishment of the DBST

2.1 Purpose

- 2.1.1 Every education district is required to establish a District Based Support Team. The DBST must be established according to the procedures set out in these SOPs.

2.2 Responsibility for Establishing a DBST

- 2.2.1 The District Director must establish the DBST and ensure it is functional and supported. The District Director is the Chairperson of the DBST and must provide leadership to the DBST.

³ Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support Policy, DBE (2014), p. 8

⁴

2.2.2 The District Director must:

2.2.2.1 Appoint the core members of the DBST.

2.2.2.2 Appoint a DBST Coordinator, who must be a member of the District Management Team.

2.2.2.3 Ensure the DBST Coordinator has sufficient time and resources to perform their functions effectively.

3. Composition of the DBST

3.1 Purpose

3.1.1 To fulfil its functions adequately, the DBST must consist of members with the necessary skills, expertise, knowledge, and authority.

3.1.2 The DBST is comprised of both core members and non-core members, who are co-opted from time to time to problem-solve particular concerns and challenges in a district.

3.2 Composition

3.2.1 Core members

3.2.1.1 The District Director will officially appoint the core members of the DBST in writing. Include appointment letters accompanied by the confidentiality form (see **Annexure J**), clearly outlining the specific roles and responsibilities of each member. The team must, as a minimum, comprise the following members:

3.2.1.1.1 District Director

3.2.1.1.2 DBST Coordinator

3.2.1.1.3 Specialist learner and educator support personnel (psychologists, therapists, remedial/ learning support teachers, social workers)

3.2.1.1.4 Specialist support personnel and teachers from existing special schools and special school resource centres.

3.2.1.1.5 Circuit Managers

3.2.1.1.6 A representative from the following sub-directorates:

- Inclusive Education.
- Curriculum.
- Exams and Assessment.
- Early Childhood Development.
- Governance and Management.

- Human Resources.
- Teacher Development.
- Infrastructure and physical planning.
- Administration: Provides administrative and financial management support.
- Care and Support for Teaching and Learning Coordinator

3.2.2 Non-core members

3.2.2.1 The core membership of the DBST must identify and co-opt non-core members to the team to provide input into some of the DBST meetings/activities. These may include representatives from:

3.2.2.1.1 Higher Education Institutions.

3.2.2.1.2 Other Government departments: Department of Health, Department of Social Development, Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, Department of Transport,

3.2.2.1.3 Non-Government Organisations.

3.2.2.1.4 Community-Based Organisations.

3.2.2.1.5 Organisations for and of Persons with Disabilities.

3.2.2.1.6 Representatives from the LGBTQI+ community

3.2.2.1.7 Faith-Based Organisations.

3.2.2.1.8 Traditional leaders

3.2.2.1.9 Traditional healers.

4. The functions of the DBST

4.1 Purpose

4.1.1 The primary role of the DBST is to support education institutions (including early childhood centres, schools, further education colleges, and adult learning centres) to identify and address barriers to learning and promote effective teaching and learning.

4.1.2 This must include classroom and organisational support, specialised learner and teacher support, curricular and institutional development (including management and governance), and administrative support.⁵

4.2 Individual Learner Support

4.2.1 Request for additional support

4.2.1.1 The DBST must respond to requests for further support from SBSTs for an individual learner through the processes outlined in the Policy on SIAS. Specifically, the SBST must use DBE Form 120 for this purpose.

4.2.1.1.1 Step 1: The DBST receives a referral, for which they must acknowledge receipt within five days.

4.2.1.1.2 Step 2: The DBST must study the report provided by the SBST (DBE 120, SNA 1 & 2 and other supporting documentation) on the barriers identified and support provided/implement up to that point, as well as the impact of the support. The DBST will review the case and refer it back to the SBST with comments on additional support the school should provide to the learner before the DBST provides further support. The DBST must complete SNA 3. This feedback must be provided to the SBST not later than four weeks after the date of referral.

4.2.1.1.3 Step 3: Should the DBST determine that additional support should be provided to the SBST, the DBST must complete Form DBE 121 – The DBST Plan of Action concerning the learner and DBE Form DBE 122 – The DBST Plan of Action concerning the school. This includes completing the DBST checklist and using the table provided in SIAS to determine the level of support for the learner. This feedback must be provided to the SBST not later than four weeks after the date of referral.

4.2.1.2 The DBST must assess the eligibility of requests made by the SBST by gathering additional information, administering relevant assessments, and conducting interviews and, where reasonably necessary, site visits.

4.2.1.3 Step 4: The DBST must consult with the parent/caregiver in developing the action plan. The parent or caregiver must sign the DBE 121. The DBST officials from the relevant sub-directorates must be involved in developing the DBST action plan. The DBST coordinator will ensure the relevant members of the DBST attend these meetings.

4.2.1.4 Step 5: The DBST should determine dates for reviewing the interventions in the plan of action and must monitor and review the implementation of the DBST plan according to those timeframes. Progress must be reported quarterly.

⁵ Conceptual and Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of Inclusive Education: District-Based Support Teams, DBE, (2005), Page 6

4.2.2 Request for placement in a special school

4.2.2.1 Placement in a special school should be considered as a last resort and only when it would be in the best interests of a learner to be placed in a specialised setting.

Steps in considering placement in a special school	Relevant SIAS Form to be completed	Timeframes
Step 1: Referral is received by the DBST and must acknowledge receipt of referral	N/A	Within five days of receipt of the referral
Step 2: The DBST must study the report provided by the SBST (DBE 120, SNA 1 & 2 and other supporting documentation) on the barriers identified and support provided/implement up to that point, as well as the impact of the support. The DBST will review the case and refer it back to the SBST with comments on additional support the school should provide to the learner before the DBST provides further support. In certain critical cases, immediate DBST support is required to avoid delays in providing high-level interventions.	SNA 3	Not later than four weeks from receipt of referral
Step 3: Should the DBST determine that additional support should be provided to the SBST, the DBST must complete the DBST Plan of action concerning the learner and the school	Form DBE 121 – The DBST Plan of Action concerning the learner. DBE Form DBE 122 – The DBST Plan of Action concerning the school	Not later than four weeks from receipt of referral
Step 4: Once the DBST and school, in consultation with the parent, are satisfied that all efforts have been made to make support available to the learner in their closest school and that it would be in the best interest of the learner to be placed in a special school, the DBST should recommend the most appropriate school.	Form DBE 123a and b	Within two weeks
Step 5: Form DBE 123a and b must be sent to the provincial admission committee for approval.	Form DBE 123a and b	The DBST must be notified of the outcome, and the support must be accessed within five (5) working days .
Step 6: The DBST must notify the school and parent of the outcome of approval from the provincial admission committee.	N/A	Within five (5) working days
Step 7: The DBST must facilitate the placement without delay.	N/A	As soon as reasonably practicable

4.2.3 Request for accommodations and concessions

4.2.3.1 Providing reasonable accommodations and concessions for assessment and learning is necessary to ensure equitable access to teaching and learning for many learners. The need for accommodation and concessions should be identified early in a child's education career.

4.2.3.2 The DBST should facilitate receiving and processing applications for accommodations and concessions without delay. The DBST should follow provincial guidelines concerning additional information and documentation needed.

4.3 School-Teacher Level Support

4.3.1 The SBST may request assistance from the DBST for school-teacher-level support. In this way, indirect support to learners is provided through supporting teachers and school management, focusing on curriculum and institutional development.

4.3.2 The DBST must consider these requests and complete Form DBE 122, making recommendations.

4.4 Support to SBSTs

4.4.1 One of the primary functions of the DBST is the development and ongoing support of SBSTs within their district.

4.4.2 This support may include:

4.4.2.1 Where there are no SBSTs, the district team could assist schools to set them up.

4.4.2.2 In the early stages of developing SBSTs, the participation of a district support member in regular meetings at the school will assist in building the school's capacity to identify and address its own needs and challenges.

4.4.2.3 Where SBSTs already exist but are struggling to function, the district team could assist them.

4.4.2.4 DBSTs should inform SBSTs about what expertise is available in the district support structures and how to obtain assistance when they need it.

4.4.2.5 DBSTs should assist schools in forming 'clusters' with other neighbouring institutions to provide 'peer support'.

4.4.2.6 DBSTs should also assist SBSTs in identifying and using local community support networks to improve teaching and learning processes and help schools link their needs with local resources to address them.

4.4.3 Note: The DBST must support the school and SBST in implementing the SIP for schools identified as underperforming in section 58b of the SASA.

4.4.4 In addition, the DBST must train SBSTs to implement the SOPs.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation of Effectiveness and Functioning of SBST

5.1 The DBST is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of SBSTs.

5.2 DBSTs must identify strategies for feedback, review and continuous improvement of SBSTs.

6. Indicators for functioning SBST

6.1 The DBST should monitor the functioning of the SBST according to the following indicators:

6.1.1 Composition

6.1.2 Frequency of meetings – at least 1 per month for ordinary meetings and more frequently for case meetings

6.1.3 Agenda – covers all items that should be considered in ordinary and case meetings

6.1.4 SBST File – include all docs as per SOPs

6.1.5 Requests for support from teachers are reviewed and acted on

6.1.6 ISPs are developed, implemented and reviewed

6.1.7 Requests for support from DBST are followed up

6.1.8 List of external support providers is kept and updated at least annually

6.1.9 Referrals for support to external support providers are followed up

6.1.10 Year plan is drawn up, implemented and evaluated

6.1.11 Accurate statistics are collated by SBST – including:

1.1.1.1 Number of learners screened (Learner Profiles)

1.1.1.2 Number of learners identified as experiencing barriers to learning/requiring additional/specific support (SNA 1)

1.1.1.3 Number of cases referred to the SBST (SNA 2)

- 1.1.1.4 Number of ISPs developed
- 1.1.1.5 Number of learners receiving concessions and accommodations (Form DBE 124)
- 1.1.1.6 Number of cases referred to DBST (Form DBE 120)
- 1.1.1.7 Number of cases resolved (SNA 3)

(See **Annexure I**)

7. Roles and responsibilities of DBST members

7.1 Purpose

7.1.1 Each role player in the DBST has particular roles and responsibilities that they must perform. The section sets out these roles and responsibilities.

7.2 Role of the District Director

7.2.1 The District Director must preside over and chair the meetings of the DBST and provide leadership to and management of the support team.

7.2.2 The focus should be on coordination and collaboration to ensure holistic and integrated support provision. Coordination is about ensuring that quality support services are provided in a well-managed, effective, efficient, and economical way.

7.2.3 The specific roles of the District Director are to:

- 1.1.1.8 Establish the District-Based Support Team
- 1.1.1.9 Ensure that the team is functional and supported.
- 1.1.1.10 Appoint the core members of the DBST from each of the sub-directorates within the district.
- 1.1.1.11 Appoint a DBST Coordinator from the senior management level of the education district.
- 1.1.1.12 Ensure the DBST trains SBSTs on the SOPs.
- 1.1.1.13 Evaluate the effectiveness of support interventions two times per year - a mid-year evaluation (in June) and an end-of-year evaluation (in November).

7.3 Role of the DBST Coordinator

7.3.1 The DBST Coordinator fulfils the following roles:

- 1.1.1.14 Plan the DBST schedule for the year.
- 1.1.1.15 Develop and circulate the agenda for each meeting.
- 1.1.1.16 Assign a minute taker for each meeting.
- 1.1.1.17 Circulate minutes to the DBST.
- 1.1.1.18 Allocate duties to specific members of the team.
- 1.1.1.19 Check that each referral the DBST receives has all necessary and completed supporting documentation from the SBST.
- 1.1.1.20 Liaise with SBSTs and PEDs.
- 1.1.1.21 Liaise with external support providers.
- 1.1.1.22 Follow up on referrals.
- 1.1.1.23 Review and sign relevant SIAS-related forms. SNA 3, Form DBE 121, Form DBE 122, Form DBE 123b, Form DBE 124, Form DBE 125, Form DBE 126)
- 1.1.1.24 Ensure the DBST File is stored securely and that the confidential and personal information of learners, parents, and teachers is protected by the Protection of Personal Information Act.

7.4 Role of the DBST members

7.4.1 The core members of the DBST must identify and co-opt non-core team members as and when necessary.

7.4.2 Attend DBST meetings.

7.4.3 Provide input and participate in the functioning of the DBST as per their expertise and competencies.

7.4.4 Maintain the confidentiality of all matters and individual cases discussed in meetings.

8. Operational Management of the DBST

8.1 Purpose

8.1.1 The purpose of this section is to outline the operational requirements relating to the functioning of the DBST. It sets out the requirements for the DBST meetings as well as the requirements for record keeping.

8.2 Meetings of the DBST

8.2.1 All DBSTs must meet regularly to discuss, plan, monitor and evaluate the activities of DBST.

8.2.2 Case meetings (meetings to develop an Action Plan in response to individual learner support requests from SBSTs) should occur more regularly outside of ordinary meetings, depending on the number of cases that need to be considered.

8.2.3 Developing action plans and case discussions should not be delayed as this will mean that valuable time will be lost before support is put in place. This can have detrimental long-term consequences for learning outcomes.

8.2.4 Ordinary meetings

Table 4: Different types of DBST meetings

TYPE OF MEETING	FREQUENCY	WHO SHOULD ATTEND	AGENDA ITEMS TO BE COVERED
Ordinary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least once per month. Urgent meetings need to be called should a need arise. 	All core members of the DBST must attend ordinary meetings. Non-core members may be invited to participate in certain meetings depending on what is being covered in the agenda.	The following items should be included in the agenda of ordinary meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring the year plan Reviewing activities undertaken by the DBST since the last meeting Review new cases referred to the DBST to determine the next steps – either SNA 3 suggestions for alternative support to SBST or referral to case meeting. Case meeting must happen within two weeks of the ordinary meeting. Develop a plan to address new support needs identified by SBSTs. (Form DBE 122) Feedback on cases – number of cases received, resolved, Action plans developed, pending, referred for placement, learners referred for accommodations, concessions, exemptions or endorsed NSC. (See Annexure K: Meeting Agenda)

TYPE OF MEETING	FREQUENCY	WHO SHOULD ATTEND	AGENDA ITEMS TO BE COVERED
Case meetings	At least once per month, in addition to the ordinary meetings, unless there are no individual cases for consideration.	DBST Coordinator, officials with relevant specialist knowledge and skill, co-opted members, and officials from the SSRC.	Individual learner cases referred from SBSTs are discussed during regular case meetings. Agenda items should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review SNA 2 • Action Plan developed where necessary • Review of Action Plans (See Annexure L: Meeting Agenda)

8.2.5 Record keeping

8.2.5.1 The DBST Coordinator must keep a DBST file. The file should contain the following documentation:

8.2.5.1.1 Composition of DBST

8.2.5.1.2 Year plan (See **Annexure M**)

8.2.5.1.3 Minutes must be kept for each meeting and circulated to all members, and a hard copy must be kept in the DBST file. (See **Annexure N**)

8.2.5.1.4 DBST meeting attendance registers

8.2.5.1.5 Information relating to:

8.2.5.1.6 List of learners referred to DBST (supporting documentation – SNA 2 and 3, Form DBE 120, Form DBE 121, Form DBE 122, Form DBE 123a and 123b, Form DBE 124, Form DBE 125, Form DBE 126) (See **Annexure O**)

8.2.5.1.7 List of support providers (See **Annexure P**)

8.2.5.1.8 Training programmes for the DBST

9. Capacity building of the DBST

9.1 Purpose

9.1.1 PEDs must ensure DBSTs are trained on these SOPs and their roles and responsibilities. All members of DBSTs must have general insights, knowledge, and skills relevant to their roles. However, additional training and support needs of DBST members have to be identified in each local context.

9.2 Capacity building

9.2.1 Provision of this training and support should be provided by:

- 9.2.1.1 Education officials at provincial and national levels who have appropriate knowledge and expertise.
- 9.2.1.2 Support providers and teachers in district support structures, schools, and other education institutions with relevant knowledge and skills to share through a 'peer support' approach.
- 9.2.1.3 Higher education institutions offer relevant programmes in the areas concerned (in particular, those that provide pre-and in-service (continuing education) programmes for support service providers).
- 9.2.1.4 NGOs and other community resources with particular expertise to offer.
- 9.2.1.5 Relevant consultants and technical advisors.
- 9.2.1.6 Human resource directorates in the Department of Education must be centrally involved in these activities.

9.2.2 In addition to training related to particular areas of expertise (e.g. Therapy), some generic or core training needs that are likely to be appropriate to all members of the team include:

- 9.2.2.1 Understanding the challenges of providing support.
- 9.2.2.2 Knowing what support is available within education, other government departments, and local communities.
- 9.2.2.3 Understanding the concept of inclusive education, including the attitude changes required.
- 9.2.2.4 Understanding the barriers to learning and development within a systemic understanding of problems and solutions.
- 9.2.2.5 Developing knowledge and skills to address barriers to learning at the level of the learner, the educator, and the institution.
- 9.2.2.6 Facilitation skills to perform training roles required at this level.
- 9.2.2.7 Networking skills and learning to 'work together' through team effectiveness training and ongoing support.
- 9.2.2.8 Basic management and leadership development, including project management skills.

9.2.3 An action-reflection approach to developing the DBSTs is essential to continuously develop the attitudes, skills and knowledge needed to provide adequate support services. This means that teams commit themselves to thinking about how they operate and how they can improve.

Figure 8: Capacity building cycle

10. Monitoring, support, and evaluation

10.1 Purpose

10.1.1 The PED is responsible for regular monitoring and evaluation of the functioning and effectiveness of DBSTs. This section sets out the indicators for a functioning DBST against which they should be evaluated and the monitoring, support, and evaluation process.

10.2 Process

10.2.1 The PED should perform a monitoring visit to the DBST at least twice per year.

10.2.2 The PED must use the monitoring tool (see **Annexure O**).

10.2.3 When a DBST requires additional support, the PED must identify strategies for feedback, review, and continuous improvement of SBSTs.

10.3 Indicators for functioning DBST

10.3.1 Composition

10.3.2 Frequency of meetings

10.3.3 Agenda – covers all items that should be considered

10.3.4 DBST File – include all docs as per SOPs

10.3.5 Requests for support from SBSTs are reviewed and acted on

10.3.6 Plans of Action (DBE 121/122) are developed, implemented and reviewed

10.3.7 List of external support providers is kept and updated at least annually

10.3.8 Referrals for support to external support providers are followed up

10.3.9 Year plan is drawn up, implemented and evaluated

10.3.10 Accurate statistics are collated by DBST – including:

10.3.10.1 Number of cases referred to the DBST (Form DBE 120)

10.3.10.2 Number of Plans of Action developed (Form DBE 121 & 122)

10.3.10.3 Number of learners receiving concessions and accommodations (Form DBE 124)

10.3.10.4 Number of learners receiving specialised LTSM from the district

10.3.10.5 Number of learners requiring placement in special schools (Form DBE 123a & 123b)

10.3.10.6 Number of learners placed in special schools

10.3.10.7 Number of cases resolved (SNA 3)

10.3.10.8 Training provided by DBST to schools/ SBST

(See **Annexure Q: Monitoring Template**)

11. Role of Provincial Education Departments

11.1 Purpose

11.1.1 It is the responsibility of the Chief Directorate: District Coordination to ensure the effective functioning of the DBST in collaboration with the following Directorates:

- Inclusive Education.
- Curriculum.
- Exams and Assessment.
- Early Childhood Development.
- Governance and Management.
- Human Resources.
- Teacher Development.
- Infrastructure and physical planning.
- Administration: Provides administrative and financial management support.
- Care and Support for Teaching and Learning.

11.2 Roles of the District Coordination Chief Directorate

The District Coordination Chief Directorate in each PED is responsible for:

- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of DBSTs,
- Ensuring DBSTs are trained on these SOPs and their roles and responsibilities.
- Providing support to DBST.

Annexure J: DBST Member Confidentiality Agreement

District: _____

DBST Member name: _____

DBST Confidentiality agreement

In accepting my role as a member of the DBST, I, _____, acknowledge that I will have access to and become aware of personal confidential information of learners and their families. I agree to refrain from discussing this personal and confidential information, including the learner's health status and psychosocial or mental health condition, with unauthorised persons. Unauthorised persons include:

- persons outside of the DBST who are not directly involved in the well-being of the learner or
- who are not directly attending to a matter that affects a learner.

I agree to always respect the personal and confidential information of learners and their families. I am aware that I can, however, disclose confidential information of a learner to the relevant persons to further assist/ intervene in the matter under the following circumstances:

- When a learner is a danger to him/herself (e.g. Suicidal tendencies)
- When a learner is a danger to others (e.g. infringes on the rights of others)
- When you have permission from a learner of an appropriate age to give consent or their parent/ caregiver if they are below the age of consent. (Child Justice Act)

If the above conditions apply, the affected learner and their parent or caregiver should be duly informed.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Annexure K: DBST Meeting Agenda

DBST ORDINARY MEETING AGENDA			
District:		Meeting date:	
Meeting venue:		Meeting time:	
TIME	AGENDA ITEM	FACILITATOR	
(+/- 5 mins)	1. Welcome, apologies and appointment of meeting scribe	Chairperson (District Director)	
(+/-5 mins)	2. Adopt previous minutes	Chairperson	
(+/-10 mins)	3. Review of activities for the last meeting	DBST Coordinator	
(+/-10 mins)	4. Review activities on the year plan	Chairperson	
(+/-15 mins)	5. Review new cases received from SBSTs	DBST Coordinator	
(+/-15 mins)	6. Feedback on case meetings	DBST Coordinator	
(+/-15 mins)	7. Feedback on referrals	DBST Coordinator	
(+/-10 mins)	8. AOB	Chairperson	
(+/-5 mins)	9. Meeting closed	Chairperson	

Annexure L: DBST Case (Action Plan) Meeting Agenda

DBST CASE MEETING AGENDA			
District:		Meeting date:	
Meeting venue:		Meeting time:	
TIME	AGENDA ITEM	FACILITATOR	
(+/- 5 mins)	1. Welcome, introductions, apologies, and appointment of meeting scribe	DBST Coordinator	
(+/-10 mins)	2. Presentation of the case for discussion	DBST Coordinator	
(+/-15-30 mins)	3. Case discussion	DBST Coordinator	
(+/-15 mins)	4. Complete Action Plan	DBST Coordinator	
(+/-5 mins)	5. Set dates for the review meeting	DBST Coordinator	
(+/-5 mins)	6. Meeting closed	DBST Coordinator	

Annexure M: DBST Year Plan

DISTRICT: _____

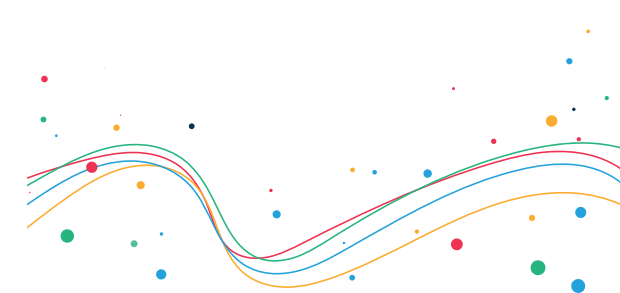
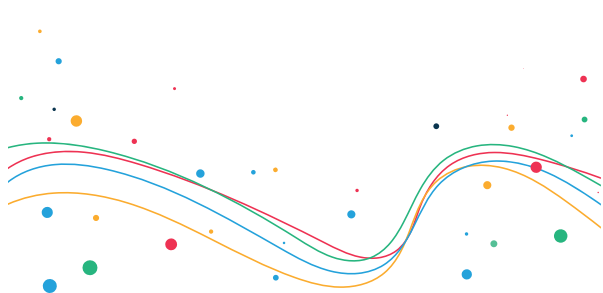
NO	ACTIVITY	PROPOSED DATE	RESPONSIBILITY
FIRST QUARTER ACTIVITIES – JANUARY-MARCH			
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
SECOND QUARTER ACTIVITIES – APRIL-JUNE			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
THIRD QUARTER ACTIVITIES – JULY-SEPTEMBER			
9.			
10.			
11.			
12.			
FOURTH QUARTER ACTIVITIES – OCTOBER-DECEMBER			
13.			
14.			
15.			
16.			

DISTRICT DIRECTOR **SIGNATURE** **DATE**

DBST COORDINATOR **SIGNATURE** **DATE**

Annexure N: DBST Meeting Minutes

DBST MEETING MINUTES			
District:		Meeting date:	
Meeting venue:		Meeting time:	
Present:		Apologies:	
	AGENDA ITEM	DISCUSSION AND DECISIONS TAKEN	
Meeting opened at			
AOB			
Meeting closed at			
SIGNED BY DISTRICT DIRECTOR:		DATE:	
SIGNED BY DBST COORDINATOR:		DATE:	



Annexure Q: DBST Monitoring Tool

DISTRICT							
NAME OF DISTRICT DIRECTOR AND CONTACT DETAILS							
NAME OF DBST COORDINATOR AND CONTACT DETAILS							
Number of schools in the district	Primary	High	Special School	Special school resource centre	Other		
ITEMS	RATING						COMMENTS
	0	1	2	3	4	5	
1. District Based Support Team - Composition							
a) Composition complies with requirements (core and non-core members)							
b) District Director acts as Chairperson of DBST							
c) DBST Coordinator is an SMT member							
SUB-TOTAL	/15						
2. DBST - Meetings							
a) Monthly ordinary meetings of DBST							
b) Case meetings held frequently							
c) Agenda covers all necessary items							
d) Signed Minutes kept							
e) Attendance at meetings is satisfactory							
SUB-TOTAL	/25						
3. DBST – File contains:							
a) All necessary docs as per SOPs are up to date							
b) Training programmes for DBST members							
c) List of external support providers							
SUB-TOTAL	/15						
4. DBST responsibilities							
a) Evidence of training and support of schools/ SBSTs (Attendance register)							
b) Requests for support from SBST reviewed							
c) Action Plans developed							
d) Action plans reviewed regularly							
e) SNA Forms properly completed							
f) Evidence of cases successfully resolved by DBST							
g) Year plan reviewed							
h) Evidence of learners placed in special schools							
i) Applications for accommodations and concessions made and followed up on							
SUB-TOTAL	/45						

ITEMS	TOTALS FOR EACH SECTION
1. DBST - Composition	/15
2. DBST - meetings	/25
3. DBST - file	/15
4. DBST - responsibilities	/45
GRAND TOTAL	/100

RATING SCALE

0	No evidence provided
1	Very poor
2	Poor
3	Average
4	Good
5	Very Good

FINAL RESULT OF ASSESSMENT (PLEASE TICK THE FINAL SCORE)

COLOUR CODING		SCORING
RED	DBST requires significant improvement	0-49%
ORANGE	Moderately Functioning DBST	50-69%
GREEN	Fully functional DBST	70-100%

REFERRAL STATS

DESCRIPTION	NUMBER	GENERAL COMMENTS/ PROGRESS
Number of cases referred to the DBST (Form DBE 120)		
Number of Plans of Action developed (Form DBE 121 & 122)		
Number of learners requiring placement in special schools (Form DBE 123a & 123b)		
Number of learners placed in special schools		
Number of cases resolved (SNA 3)		
Number of learners receiving specialised LTSM from the District		
Number of learners receiving accommodations and concessions (Form DBE 124)		

Remarks by official: _____

 DISTRICT DIRECTOR SIGNATURE DATE

 DBST COORDINATOR SIGNATURE DATE

 PED OFFICIAL & DE SIGNATURE DATE

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