

# GUIDELINES FOR RATIONALISATION AND RE-ALIGNMENT OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS: *A HOLISTIC APPROACH*



**basic education**

Department:  
Basic Education  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA





# **GUIDELINES FOR RATIONALISATION AND RE-ALIGNMENT OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS:**

## ***A Holistic Approach***

***November 2017***



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## FOREWORD



Our country South Africa comprises rural, farm, township, sub-urban and urban settlements. Some of these settlements are located in remote areas with very small population sizes. Despite the size of these settlements, the Government is expected to provide social services to these communities, in cost effective ways. Micro schools are a common phenomenon in these small human settlements, some having been developed by the local communities. The existence of these micro schools is such that the sector is not able to provide its services cost effectively. It also compromises the quality of teaching and learning due to multi-grade teaching that becomes necessary, unavailability of wide subject choices, especially for Secondary School learners and inability of the learners to participate in a wide range of sport codes and other extra-curricular activities.

Following the problems associated with micro schools, the Department of Basic Education assessed means by which quality education could be provided in an affordable manner in the immediate and long-term. This led to a need to consider closing down some of the micro schools and merge them with other schools, doing so after extensive technical assessments and inclusive stakeholder consultations have been carried out. This would be done as part of the School Rationalisation and Re-alignment Process. We appreciate the fact that there would be instances where it would not be possible to close down and merge some of the micro schools. Such micro schools would be allowed to continue to operate and be provided with appropriate facilities, adequate resources and necessary support. The primary objective of the School Rationalisation and Re-alignment process therefore is to continue providing universal access by the learners to quality basic education in a rational manner, doing so cost effectively with respect to resource provisioning, where the costs referred to are not only limited to monetary costs but also socio-economic imperatives.

We present the ***Guidelines for Rationalisation and Re-alignment of Public Schools – A Holistic Approach*** to guide the basic education sector, stakeholders and service providers on the processes and procedures to be followed when undertaking the School Rationalisation and Re-alignment Processes. These ***Guidelines*** supersede any Rationalisation Guidelines that were issued previously. They have been issued to give effect to Sections 12A and 33 of the South African Schools Act (Act No. 84 of 1996), as amended. They were tabled before the Council of Education Ministers and approved for implementation by the sector.

As these ***Guidelines*** are implemented, lessons will be learned and better ways of doing things identified. Therefore we invite further inputs from the stakeholders and the general public, to aid continuous improvement. These should be addressed to the Director-General of the Department of Basic Education, for the attention of Dr M. Mabula at Mabula.M@dbe.gov.za

MRS AM MOTSHEKGA, MP

MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION

Date: 07-12-2017.

# 1. ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS

## 1.1 Acronyms and Abbreviations

<b>AO</b>	: <i>Accounting Authority of a Department</i>
<b>Admin</b>	: <i>Administrative</i>
<b>CAPEX</b>	: <i>Capital Expenditure</i>
<b>DBE</b>	: <i>Department of Basic Education</i>
<b>DoT</b>	: <i>Department of Transport</i>
<b>DPW</b>	: <i>Department of Public Works</i>
<b>ELRC</b>	: <i>Education Labour Relations Council</i>
<b>EMIS</b>	: <i>Education Management Information System</i>
<b>FFE</b>	: <i>Furniture, Fittings and Equipment</i>
<b>GIS</b>	: <i>Geographic Information System</i>
<b>GPSSBC</b>	: <i>General Public Services Sectoral Bargaining Council</i>
<b>IAs</b>	: <i>Implementing Agents</i>
<b>I&amp;APs</b>	: <i>Interested and Affected Parties</i>
<b>IPIT</b>	: <i>Infrastructure Planning and Implementing Team</i>
<b>LEF</b>	: <i>Learner Enrolment Figures</i>
<b>LIFO</b>	: <i>Last-In-First-Out</i>
<b>LTSM</b>	: <i>Learning and Teaching Support Material</i>
<b>MDGs</b>	: <i>Millennium Developmental Goals</i>
<b>MEC</b>	: <i>Member of the Executive Council of any of the nine PEDs</i>
<b>MUNAS-PSI</b>	: <i>Minimum Uniform Norms and Standards for Public School Infrastructure</i>
<b>NNSSF</b>	: <i>National Norms and Standards for School Funding</i>
<b>NSNP</b>	: <i>National School Nutrition Programme</i>
<b>OPEX</b>	: <i>Operating Expenditure</i>
<b>PEDs</b>	: <i>Provincial Education Departments</i>
<b>PERSAL</b>	: <i><u>PER</u>sonnel and <u>SAL</u>ary Information System of Government</i>
<b>PPN</b>	: <i>Post Provisioning Norms</i>

<b>PSCBC</b>	: <i>Public Sector Collective Bargaining Council</i>
<b>PSPs</b>	: <i>Professional Service Providers</i>
<b>SASA</b>	: <i>South African Schools Act (Act No. 84 of 1996), as amended</i>
<b>SA-SAMS</b>	: <i>South African Schools Administration and Management System</i>
<b>SGB</b>	: <i>School Governing Body</i>
<b>SRRP</b>	: <i>School Rationalisation and Re-alignment Process</i>
<b>N-SRRP-C</b>	: <i>National SRRP Co-ordinator</i>
<b>P-SRRP-C</b>	: <i>Provincial SRRP Co-ordinator</i>
<b>D-SRRP-C</b>	: <i>District SRRP Co-ordinator</i>

## 1.2 Definitions

For the purpose of these *Guidelines*, the following terms shall bear the meanings reflected below:

<b>Catchment Area</b>	:	<i>A residential area or settlement from which learners attending a particular school come.</i>
<b>Department</b>	:	<i>Refers to the Department of Basic Education, any of the nine (9) Provincial Education Departments and any of the Basic Education District Offices.</i>
<b>Host School</b>	:	<i>Either an existing or a newly built school into which other schools would be merged as part of the School Rationalisation Process.</i>
<b>Inappropriate Materials</b>	:	<i>Refers to unacceptable construction materials for education facilities, and these include mud bricks, timber/planks, corrugated iron, and asbestos.</i>
<b>Minister</b>	:	<i>Minister of Basic Education.</i>
<b>Micro School</b>	:	<i>Either a primary or secondary school with learner enrolment figures that are below the minimum threshold of a small school, as stipulated in the Minimum Uniform Norms and Standards for Public School Infrastructure (MUNAS-PSI).</i>
<b>Re-aligned School</b>	:	<i>A primary or secondary school that was not aligned with the provisions of MUNAS-PSI with respect to the Grades provided or catered for in that type of school.</i>
<b>Receiving School</b>	:	<i>A school that would be receiving learners from a Re-aligned School after the learners have been moved as part of the School Re-alignment Process.</i>
<b>Unviable School</b>	:	<i>A micro school that is not capable of succeeding in fulfilling fully the purpose of an ideal teaching and learning facility, and can no longer operate meaningfully and economically with respect to curriculum provisioning and return on investment because of very low learner enrolment figures.</i>



## 2. BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Introduction

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) has a Constitutional mandate of providing quality education to all its learners. This mandate includes the provision of education facilities that are of quality standards, purpose-built, safe and accessible. Section 20 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act No. 108 of 1996) (“the Constitution”) considers it everyone’s right to basic education. According to Section 3 of the South African Schools Act (Act No. 84 of 1996), as amended (SASA), every parent/guardian is obliged to ensure that the child he/she is responsible for attends school from the age of seven. As espoused in Goals 10, 14 and 24 of the *Action Plan to 2019 – Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2030*, the goal of the DBE (Goal 10) is to “*ensure that all children remain effectively enrolled in school at least up to the year in which they turn 15*”. Accessibility to appropriate, functional, well-resourced and well-run schools is one of the enablers to this goal. To this effect, Goal 14 is to “*attract a new group of young, motivated, and appropriately trained teachers to the teaching profession every year*”. Goal 24 is to “*ensure that the physical infrastructure and environment of every school inspire learners to want to come to school and learn, and teachers to teach*”.

With respect to the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), to which South Africa is signatory, Goal No.2 is to “*achieve universal primary education*”. Access to education is one of the measures that were used to assess progress made towards the achievement of this goal. In its 2013 Country Report, South Africa reported that it had achieved its targets in this area, where 99% of 7 to 13-year old children attended schooling. However, challenges still remained with the enrolment of Grade R Learners and Learners with Disabilities. With respect to Grade R Learners, the enrolment was 39% in 2002 and 85% in 2011. Enrolment of Learners with Disabilities was 39% in 2011.

Access to primary education will continue to be realised if:

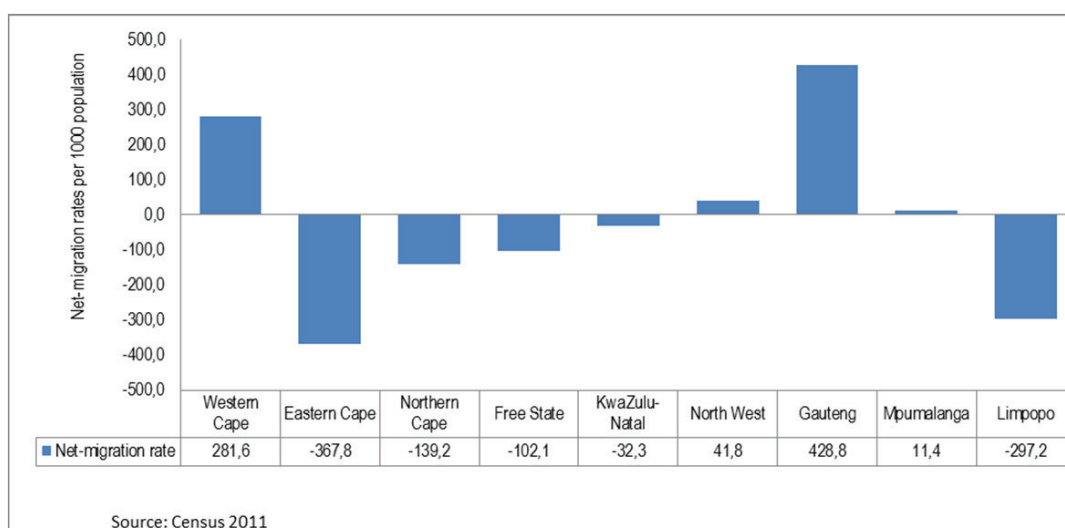
- (a) Adequate number of conducive education facilities are provided and maintained;
- (b) Learners are able to access the education facilities referred to above safely and with relative ease; and
- (c) Quality education offered by qualified, motivated and competent teachers.

### 2.2 Historic and Geographic Context

As a developing economy, South Africa comprises a mix of rural, farm, township and urban communities. Some of the rural areas and farm settlements are located in remote areas with population sizes of less than 2500. (This is a community size that warrants an establishment of a viable school.) The existence of rural and farming communities in South Africa goes back to time immemorial. With a strong drive for socio-economic development, most of the rural communities, especially in the former homelands (Qwaqwa, KwaZulu, etc.) and former TBVC States (Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei) strongly pursued the goal of educating their children. The Governments in these homelands were not strong economically and therefore the communities undertook to build some of the schools themselves. Also, transport was not easily accessible therefore schools were built as close as possible to their catchment areas, more especially the more affluent, economically strong and/or influential communities. This gave rise to a number of relatively small schools scattered in these rural and farm areas. Some of the schools were/are named after Village Chiefs, and the persona of and the economic activities taking place around some of these villages are deeply rooted in the schools built in them.

Some of the Provinces such as the Free State, Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal focussed on farming, among other economic activities. The farm workers established their settlements in the proximity of the farms they were working in. With a drive to educate their children, small schools that are scattered around the farms were also established. These schools are characterised by very low learner enrolment figures and tend to be seasonal depending upon the activities taking place on the farm.

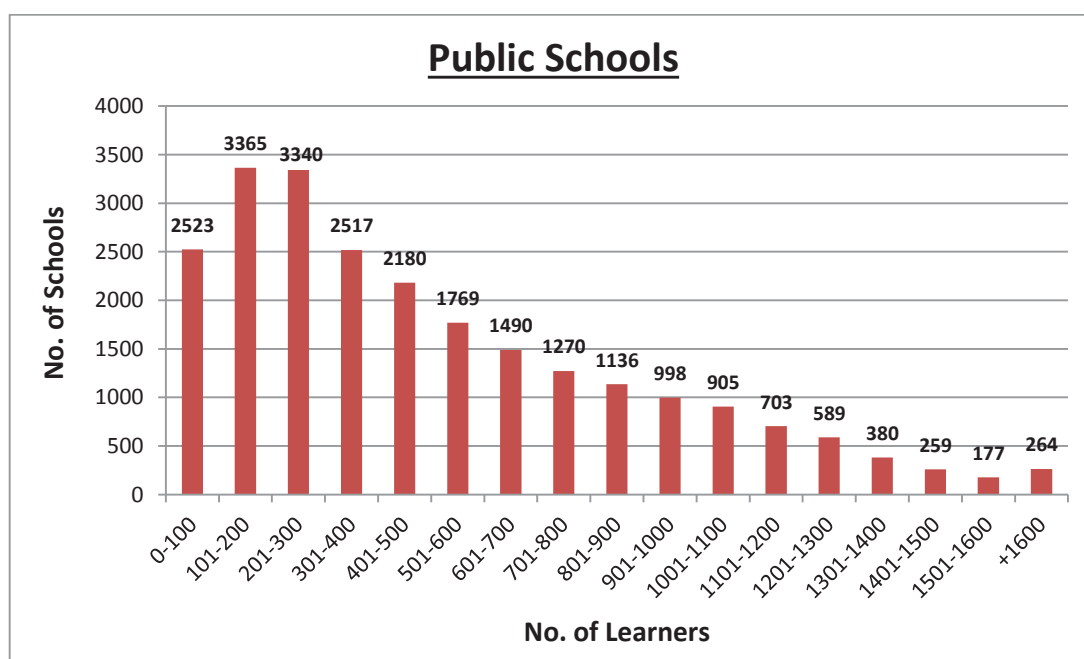
Post 1994, the learners were freer to move to schools of their choice. In recent years this has led to an erratic scholar migration with learners moving from “rural and township” schools to urban schools, and from less economically strong Provinces with relatively lower Matric (Grade 12) pass rate to more affluent Provinces with relatively higher Matric pass rate. **Figure 1** presents the net migration patterns across the country per the Statistics South Africa’s (Stats SA) report of 2016.



**Figure 1:** South African youth net migration rates by province, (Stats SA, 2016).

The main drive behind the observed migration patterns among learners is informed by parents seeking better job opportunities and learners who are pursuing schools that are perceived to be well-run and have better pass rates.

Following the above, the profile of South African Schools with respect to the distribution of learner enrolment figures across the public primary and secondary schools, based on the 2016 Snap Survey, is presented in **Figure 2** below.



**Figure 2:** Profile of South African public schools based on the Learner Enrolment Figures per 2016 Snap Survey.

### 3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

- (1) The basic education sector considered that while its drive is to ensure accessibility by all its learners to quality education that is delivered in safe, accessible, and quality education facilities, running a number of very small/micro schools was compromising its efforts and was weakening its aim of providing curriculum support effectively, efficiently and cost effectively. Regardless of the size of a school, the Department has an obligation of providing it with the adequate number of teachers, sufficient Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM) and appropriate school facilities with sufficient number of classrooms and other functional spaces.
- (2) Learners in micro schools are not able to have a wide subject choice, especially in secondary schools, and also there are limited sport codes, therefore participation in sport and other extracurricular and/or extramural activities is compromised. The effectiveness of teaching is also affected by multi-grade teaching that is found in micro primary schools.
- (3) The Department therefore considered it prudent to close down some of the micro schools and merge them with nearby schools as part of the School Rationalisation Process.
- (4) The primary objective of the School Rationalisation Process is therefore to ensure that where possible, micro schools that are unviable are closed down and merged with nearby schools, having taken certain factors into consideration.
- (5) Like in any other system, the basic education sector is in a state of flux, with new changes and developments being introduced to improve the system. These include the following:
  - (a) Initially the terms “Standard” and “Form” were used to refer to various schooling levels. These terms have now been unified and schooling levels are now referred to as “Grades”.
  - (b) Also, the education system comprised different types of schools, such as Junior Primary Schools, Junior Secondary Schools, Intermediate Schools, Senior Secondary Schools, etc. The sector has now migrated into two types of public schools which are Primary Schools and Secondary Schools. This reclassification has led to a need to move learners from their current schools to schools that offer relevant Grades, per the new classification. This is done as part of the School Re-alignment Process.
- (6) The Department is also steadfast in its drive of providing the necessary school infrastructure, eradicating the backlogs and ensuring that its school facilities meet the provisions of the *Minimum Norms and Standards for Public School Infrastructure (MUNAS-PSI)*. Progress in this regard is affected by the School Rationalisation and Re-alignment Process (SRRP) as the provision of infrastructure, especially the eradication and replacement of schools built of inappropriate materials, has to await the finalisation of the SRRP. Also this process has been hampered by poor reporting on the progress made in driving the SRRP thus making it difficult to plan properly.
- (7) The SRRP is also affecting the process of finalising Teacher Provisioning in some schools as these schools have to await the finalisation of the teacher re-allocation process (“extra” teachers, following closure of some schools).
- (8) Community resistance has also been encountered especially where the schools were built by community members, schools named after the Village Chiefs, and where there are economic spin-offs from the existence of schools in certain areas.
- (9) The roll-out of the SRRP has been marred by some problems due to a lack of clarity of procedures and processes to be followed, lack of an integrated approach given the number of facets that need to be addressed (legal, technical, human resources, administrative, etc.), lack of available funds to increase infrastructure capacity at the Host Schools because of non-integrated planning, and lack of standard parameters to guide this process. This has brought about uncertainty and indecisiveness on how some of the issues that are encountered in the

field should be dealt with, thereby leading to immense delays on the implementation. As a result of these gaps, different practices have been adopted across the sector leading to inconsistency of practice and some practices that are not fully aligned with the spirit of the SRRP. Typical problems that have been encountered include the following:

- (a) Some schools were closed down and merged with others without proper consultations with relevant stakeholders;
  - (b) Some primary schools with Learner Enrolment Figures (LEF) of up to 315 were proposed for closure;
  - (c) Up to 13 schools were earmarked to be merged into one school, where no Learner Boarding Facility was to be provided;
  - (d) The proposed total LEF in a number of schools that were earmarked for merger was in the order of 1000, and as high as 1600 in some instances. This followed plans to merge a high number of schools (per sub-section (c) above) that had relatively high numbers of learners (above the minimum threshold LEF for small schools in some cases);
  - (e) Schools that are far from public transport routes and in areas that have no access to basic services were proposed as Host Schools for merger over sites that had better access to such services;
  - (f) Proposed Host Schools were removed from the catchment areas that draw a higher number of learners in favour of smaller catchment areas;
  - (g) Some new Host Schools have been built in the middle of nowhere, with an attempt to locate them equidistant from the catchment areas they serve;
  - (h) More than one School Principal was found in some Host Schools after the merger and closure of some schools; and
  - (i) Learners were moved to Host Schools where no infrastructure provisions were made, no additional furniture was provided, and no learner transport provisions were made.
- (10) Potential perverseness and undue favouritism towards certain schools, leading to:
- (a) Schools over-subscribing with respect to the LEF to increase pay-packs to some school principals (the higher the LEF in a school, the higher the grading of the Principal, and the higher the salary pack); and
  - (b) Schools merged on a school site that had less favourable site conditions, less school infrastructure, far from the main road, and/or with limited municipal services.
- (11) It is in the light of the above that the Department of Basic Education has revised the Guidelines that existed before, to strengthen them, review the monitoring and reporting mechanism and replaced them with this document, the *Guidelines for Rationalisation and Re-alignment of Public Schools: A Holistic Approach*.

## 4. STRATEGIC INTENT OF THE SRRP

- (1) The primary question is: what does the sector want to achieve by undertaking the School Rationalisation and Re-alignment Process (SRRP)?
- (2) **The primary objective of the School Rationalisation process is to continue providing universal access by learners to quality basic education in a rational manner, doing so cost effectively with respect to resource provisioning, where the costs being referred to are not only limited to monetary costs but also socio-economic imperatives.**
- (3) The SRRP is pursued in the interest of learners and **is not** intended to deny or compromise access by any learners to quality basic education.
- (4) It is therefore imperative that the points raised in sub-sections (b) and (c) above be used as a guiding beacon and a yard-stick to be considered at all times by those involved in the SRRP.



## 5. OBJECTIVES OF THE GUIDELINES

The objectives of these *Guidelines* are to:

- (1) Provide a clear and complete roadmap to the basic education sector on the processes and procedures to be followed when undertaking the School Rationalisation and Re-alignment Processes (SRRP);
- (2) Provide clarity on certain parameters that need to be observed when considering mergers and closures of micro schools;
- (3) Identify and provide clarity on the Roles and Responsibilities of key role-players in the SRRP;
- (4) Provide guidelines on the critical areas to be reported on when providing baseline information on the SRRP and when reporting on the progress made towards the finalisation of the SRRP;
- (5) Inculcate integrated and holistic approach towards SRRP;
- (6) Ensure uniformity, consistency and predictability of the SRRP; and
- (7) Facilitate expedited decision-making processes and expedited implementation of the SRRP.

## 6. APPLICABLE LEGISLATION AND ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

These *Guidelines* should be read together with and construed in the context of the following policies, standards, and guidelines, as amended from time to time:

- (1) Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act No. 108 of 1996);
- (2) National Education Policy Act (Act No. 27 of 1996);
- (3) South African Schools Act (Act No. 84 of 1996), as amended;
- (4) Labour Relations Act (Act No. 66 of 1995);
- (5) Employment of Educators Act (Act No. 76 of 1998);
- (6) Personnel Administrative Measures (Feb 1999), as amended;
- (7) Employment Services Act (Act No. 4 of 2014);
- (8) Basic Conditions of Employment Act (Act No. 75 of 1997), as amended;
- (9) Employment Equity Act (Act No. 55 of 1998);
- (10) National Norms and Standards for School Funding ( Aug 2006);
- (11) National Treasury Regulations (March 2005);
- (12) Applicable National Treasury Practice Notes;
- (13) National Building Regulations and Building Standards Act (Act No. 103 of 1977);
- (14) Applicable South African National Standards (SANS);
- (15) National Environmental Management Act (Act No. 107 of 1998), as amended;
- (16) Occupational Health and Safety Act (Act No. 85 of 1993);
- (17) Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act (Act No. 16 of 2013);
- (18) Space Planning Norms and Standards for Office Accommodation Used by Organs of State (Gazette No. 27985, Sept 2005);
- (19) Government Immovable Asset Management Act (Act No. 19 of 2007);
- (20) Minimum Uniform Norms and Standards for Public School Infrastructure (Nov 2013);
- (21) Guidelines for the Provision of Boarding Facilities in Public Ordinary Schools;
- (22) Norms and Standards for Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Provision and Management (June 2008);
- (23) Draft National Sanitation Policy (Feb 2016);
- (24) National Learner Transport Policy ( June 2015);
- (25) Guidelines for Full-services / Inclusive Schools (2010);

- (26) White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (March 2016);
- (27) National School Nutrition Programme – Implementation, Monitoring and Reporting Manual (Jan 2004), as amended;
- (28) School Infrastructure Safety and Security Guidelines (March 2017);
- (29) National School Safety Framework (2015);
- (30) Any Applicable Municipal by-laws; and
- (31) Guidelines for General Upkeep and Maintenance of Education Facilities (2017).

## 7. SCOPE OF APPLICABILITY OF GUIDELINES AND EXCLUSIONS

### 7.1 Scope of Applicability

These *Guidelines* are applicable to:

- (1) The basic education sector as a whole, including:
  - (a) Department of Basic Education (DBE);
  - (b) Provincial Education Departments (PEDs);
  - (c) Basic Education Districts;
  - (d) Basic Education Circuits;
  - (e) The following public schools:
    - (i) Primary and Secondary Schools;
    - (ii) Ordinary and Full Service Schools; and
    - (iii) Micro, Small, Medium, Large and Mega Schools.
- (2) Any entity that is involved in the School Rationalisation and Re-alignment Process (SRRP), and these include:
  - (a) Appointed Implementing Agents (IAs);
  - (b) Appointed Professional Service Providers (PSPs); and
  - (c) Third Parties appointed or volunteered to assist the Department with the SRRP.
- (3) Third parties that might be renting out or leasing part or whole of their properties to the basic education sector to carry out the teaching and learning activities.

### 7.2 Exclusions

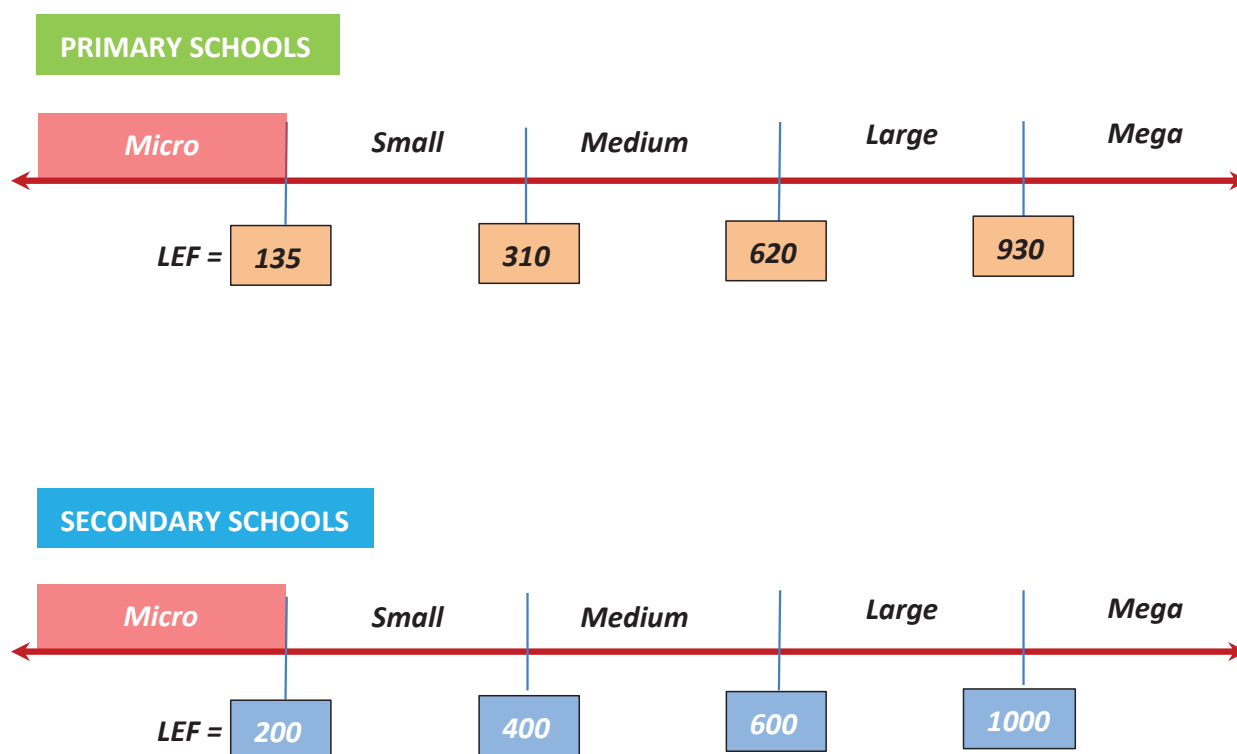
The following category of education facilities are excluded from the provisions of these *Guidelines*:

- (1) Special Schools for Learners with Disabilities;
- (2) Schools of Specialisation; and
- (3) Technical Schools.

## 8. POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS

Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 6 above, the following specific Policy and/or Legislative provisions bear relevance to the SRRP:

- (1) Section 12(1) of the South African Schools Act (SASA), as amended, requires the Member of the Executive Council (MEC), at provincial level, to provide public schools for the education of learners out of funds appropriated for this purpose by the Provincial Legislature.
- (2) The schools contemplated in sub-section (1) above would be:
  - (a) Built in accordance with the Building Regulations, South African National Standards, Norms and Standards for Education Facilities;
  - (b) Required to adhere the applicable environmental requirements per the National Environmental Management Act and Occupational Health and Safety Act;
  - (c) Be resourced with sufficient and competent educators per the Post Provisioning Norms (PPN), provided with sufficient funding and support systems per the provisions of the National Norms and Standards for School Funding (NNSSF); and
  - (d) Looked after and maintained in accordance with the *Guidelines for General Upkeep and Maintenance of Education Facilities*.
- (3) Regulation 5 of the *Minimum Norms and Standards for Public School Infrastructure (MUNAS-PSI)* provides for different types of schools to be pursued by the sector, being Primary Schools (to cater for Grades R to 7 learners, with a maximum of 30 learners per Grade R class and a maximum of 40 learners per class in Grades 1 to 7) and Secondary Schools (to cater for Grades 8 to 12 learners, with a maximum of 40 learners per class). It further provides for different sizes of schools, per Learner Enrolment Figures (LEF) as reflected in the continuum in **Figure 3** below:



**Figure 3:** Different types of schools and sizes per the LEF in each school.



- (4) Regulation 5(6) of *MUNAS-PSI* requires that the establishment or retention of micro schools (primary schools with LEF of less than 135 and 200 for secondary schools) should, based on valid reasons, be approved by an MEC.
- (5) Following sub-section (4) above multi-grade teaching would be permissible in micro primary schools. However, multi-grade teaching across phases should be precluded and should only be in phases, namely Foundation Phase, Intermediate Phase and Senior Phase classes, but with no more than two Grades per class.
- (6) Regulation 5(7) of *MUNAS-PSI* further provides for the establishment or retention of Combined Schools where it is not practicable to have a separate primary and secondary school, pending the approval of an MEC, based on valid reasons to do so.
- (7) Section 12A of SASA makes a provision for an MEC to approve merger of two or more public schools into a single school, subject to certain processes been followed.
- (8) Section 33 of SASA makes a provision for an MEC to approve closure of a public school, subject to certain processes been followed.

## 9. CONDITIONS PRECEDENT TO SRRP

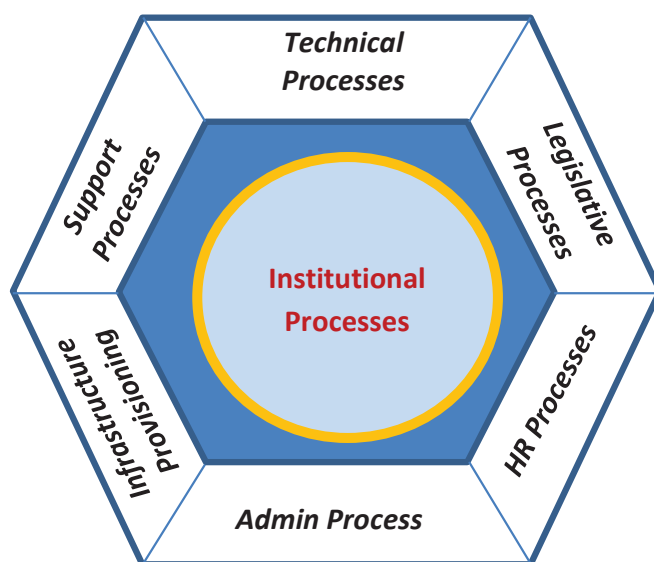
- (1) The success of the School Rationalisation and Re-alignment Process (SRRP) stems from the:
  - (a) Consultation with all the interested and affected parties (individuals, organised groups/structures and communities);
  - (b) Provision of adequate learning and teaching spaces and amenities where the learners would be moved to;
  - (c) Provision of Learner Transport where the learners would be moved further away from their homes; and/or
  - (d) Provision of Learner Boarding Facilities, where provision of Learner Transport is not economically feasible or where certain strategic imperatives are being pursued.
- (2) **No school should be closed down and merged with another school and no learners and educators should be moved to the merged school (i.e. Host School) unless:**
  - (a) All the applicable **legislative processes** have been adhered to;
  - (b) **Consultations** have been held with and **Written Notices** issued to all the relevant Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) who include:
    - (i) The affected School Principals and respective School Governing Bodies (SGBs);
    - (ii) Respective District Directors and Circuit Managers;
    - (iii) Affected learners and their parents/guardians;
    - (iv) Respective Traditional Leaders;
    - (v) Respective Local Councillors;
    - (vi) Respective Teacher Unions;
    - (vii) Affected school community and general public; and
    - (viii) Private property owners where the affected public schools are located in their private properties.
  - (c) All the **Human Resource related matters** pertaining to the affected School Governing Bodies (SGBs), educators, learners, administrative and support staff have been addressed and concluded amicably;
  - (d) All the necessary **infrastructure provisions** have been made and finalised at the Host School or Receiving School to accommodate the additional learners and members of staff from the schools earmarked for closure or Re-aligned Schools;
  - (e) All the **learner transport arrangements** have been confirmed and finalised with the relevant Department of Transport, i.e. in instances where the learner transport needs to be provided;
  - (f) Where **Learner Boarding Facilities** would be provided, to ensure that facilities that are complete and ready for occupation are available; being safe, built of appropriate materials, of acceptable quality standards, fully equipped with all the requisite support spaces, recreational facilities and the necessary furniture, fittings and equipment (FFE);
  - (g) All the attendant **Administrative Processes** been finalised; and
  - (h) All the relevant **Support Processes** been initiated and, where possible, concluded.

## 10. PROCEDURES FOR SCHOOL RATIONALISATION AND RE-ALIGNMENT PROCESSES

### 10.1 School Rationalisation Process

#### 10.1.1 General Considerations for Mergers and Closures

- (1) The main focus of the School Rationalisation Process is to ensure that, where possible, schools that are operating below the minimum threshold of LEF for small schools are merged with nearby schools to improve the quality of education offered in such schools, reduce the cost of providing education, and to ensure return on investment that is associated with the provision and maintenance of school facilities.
- (2) The process entails merger and closure of micro schools.
- (3) The process is by its nature very sensitive, involved and multi-faceted as depicted in **Figure 4** below, indicating the mandatory 7 SRRP Processes:



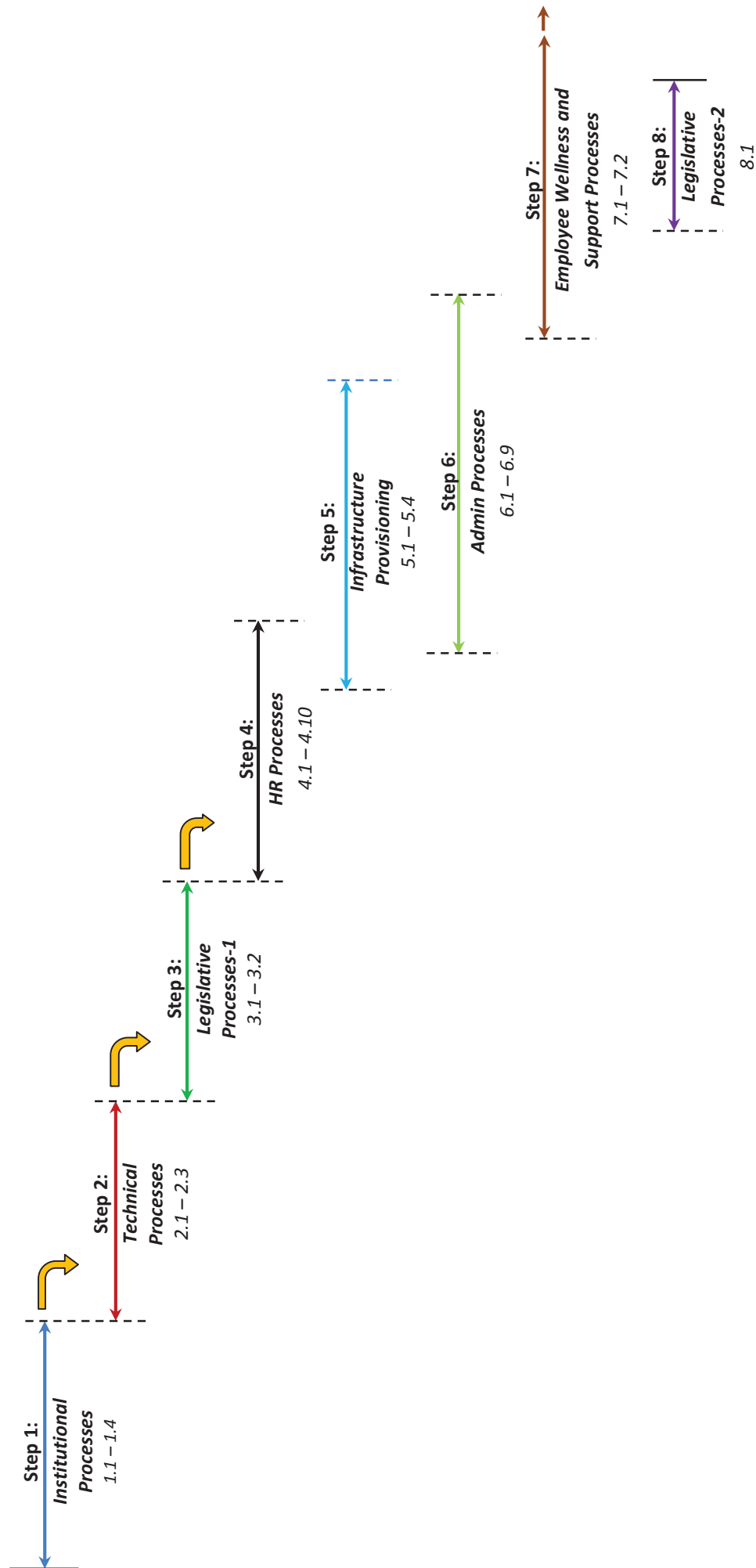
**Figure 4:** The 7 SRRP Processes to be addressed as part of the School Rationalisation and Re-alignment. Process.

- (4) Each of the SRRP Processes in Figure 4 above should be pursued to their own logical conclusions and should be addressed in a systematic and integrated manner.
- (5) For the SRRP to stand a better chance of success, it must have a dedicated Sub-unit that is focussing on it within each Department. The process is not a “quick-fix-overnight” exercise but needs a dedicated team of people focussing on it at National, Provincial and District levels.
- (6) The SRRP must be planned properly and when a decision has been made to merge and to close down the identified lists of schools, the implementation process must be projectised, with all the implementation processes spearheaded at Provincial Level.
- (7) In essence, the entire process would be:
  - (i) Guided by DBE at National, as far as the policy provisioning, support, monitoring and oversight functions are concerned, per Section 8 of the National Education Policy Act (NEPA);

- (ii) Co-ordination, implementation and project management led by the Provinces; and
  - (iii) Support, ground work, and school guidance and support driven by the Districts, and where possible or necessary, assisted by the Circuits.
- (8) The overall SRRP is costly as it would involve provision of school infrastructure and amenities, school uniform to displaced needy learners, Learner Transport (where necessary), and/or Learner Boarding Facilities (where necessary). It should therefore be planned properly to ensure that all the interfaces are well-managed and streamlined, and budget is available to cater for all the associated capital and operating expenditure requirements.
  - (9) Given the number of schools that need to be attended to under SRRP, there is a need to focus on a cluster of identified schools at a time for effective management, better planning, and expedited implementation, subject to budget availability.
  - (10) There must be close liaison at all times between the Infrastructure Planning and Implementation Team (IPIT) at a Provincial Level and the SRRP Team. This will enable the Infrastructure Unit to plan its infrastructure interventions properly and not find itself investing (e.g. upgrading part or whole) a school that will be closed down and be merged with another soon and also for them to prioritise schools that are earmarked as Host Schools where possible.
  - (11) Progress on the SRRP needs to be reported by the Provincial Education Departments (PEDs) through their appointed Provincial SRRP Co-ordinators (P-SRRP-C) to the Department of Basic Education's (DBE) appointed National SRRP Co-ordinator (N-SRRP-C), at the prescribed intervals using the specified reporting format. This would be done as part of DBE's monitoring, evaluation and oversight function.
  - (12) SRRP is not a once off process as the situation on the ground keeps changing, therefore requiring close monitoring and prompt action when needed.

### 10.1.2 Procedures for Mergers and Closures of Public Schools

- (1) The procedures and steps to be followed in undertaking mergers and closures of micro public schools are summarised in **Figure 5** overleaf. These incorporate all the SRRP Processes in Figure 4 above and are further expatiated in the sections that follow.
- (2) Figure 5 emphasizes a systematic and integrated approach in undertaking the SRRP. It also highlights the chronological sequence of events and potential overlaps on others. The extent of the overlaps would be on a case by case basis.
- (3) The steps to be followed are elucidated below:



**Figure 5:** Critical aspects to be addressed as part of the School Rationalisation and Re-alignment Process.



## Step 1: Institutional Processes (IP)

### IP-Step 1.1: Setting Up Institutional Structure, Systems and Processes for SRRP

- (a) Respective Accounting Officers (AOs) to establish and set up formal dedicated SRRP Sub-units at National, Provincial and District levels to manage all the SRRP processes.
- (b) Respective AOs to identify and formally appoint National SRRP Co-ordinator (N-SRRP-C), Provincial SRRP Co-ordinators (P-SRRP-C) and District SRRP Co-ordinators (D-SRRP-C) to provide team leadership at the respective government levels. The SRRP Team Leaders should preferably be at Senior Management Level to enable more effective management, co-ordination and liaison on complex and sensitive issues associated with SRRP.
- (c) The National, Provincial and District SRRP Team Leaders to assist with the identification of their assistants based on the workload and appropriate management structures, as would be informed by the number of schools affected by the SRRP and other pertinent issues.
- (d) The AO may establish an internal co-ordination structure to assist with the SRRP processes.
- (e) Respective AOs to provide clear Roles and Responsibilities for each of the appointed SRRP Team Members.
- (f) AOs to facilitate the process of setting up monitoring, reporting and management systems for the SRRP. This includes:
  - (i) Co-ordination with all the relevant Units such as Infrastructure, Teacher Development, etc.;
  - (ii) Ensuring that planning systems such as the Geographic Information System – GIS are set up; and
  - (iii) Ensuring that Co-ordination structures are functional.

### IP-Step 1.2: Confirmation of EMIS and SA-SAMS Information

- (a) Each Province has a defined number of public schools that are registered on the Education Management Information System (EMIS), with unique EMIS Numbers. The EMIS system is managed by the DBE.
- (b) All the schools in each Province are expected to have loaded their Learner Enrolment Figures (LEFs) and other relevant information on the South African Schools Administration and Management System (SA-SAMS managed by DBE) and to have records of LEFs for the past number of years.
- (c) District SRRP Co-ordinator (D-SRRP-C) to assess if all the EMIS and SA-SAMS information has been captured fully and correctly.
- (d) D-SRRP-C to facilitate the provision of assistance to schools where EMIS and SA-SAMS information has not been provided fully and/or correctly.

### IP-Step 1.3: Confirmation of Registered Education Facilities on the Government Immovable Asset Register

- (a) Each of the Education Facilities in the Province ought to have been captured on the Asset Register of Government Immovable Assets by the Department of Public Works (DPW) per the Government Immovable Assets Management Act (GIAMA).
- (b) The D-SRRP-C to ascertain with the relevant DPW if all the basic education immovable assets have been registered on the Government Immovable Asset Register and if the information is captured correctly and corresponds with the EMIS information.

#### **IP-Step1.4: Creation of Baseline Information for SRRP**

- (a) The Provincial SRRP Co-ordinator (P-SRRP-C) to obtain information from EMIS and SA-SAMS on all the schools in the Province and produce a profile of all the schools in the Province per LEF (similar to the one in Figure 2 under Section 2.2 above);
- (b) Identify and produce a list of all micro Primary Schools and Micro Secondary Schools in the Province.
- (c) Analyse the information on each identified micro school:
  - (i) Plot the LEF over the last five (5) years including the current LEF to establish the trends (as being Relatively Stable, Dropping, or Increasing);
  - (ii) Make a note of any economic development in the area (this might already be taking place or earmarked);
  - (iii) Size and proximity of the catchment areas; and
  - (iv) Ownership of the facilities (publicly owned or privately owned).
- (d) P-SRRP-C to engage the Infrastructure Planning and Implementing Team (IPIT) in the Province to conduct Technical Assessments following the Technical Processes below.

### **Step 2: Technical Processes (TP)**

#### **TP-Step 2.1: Desk-top Technical Assessments**

- (a) The Provincial IPITs should be having all their provincial schools plotted on a Geographic Information System (GIS) for their day-to-day planning and management processes. If not, the Provincial IPIT to plot all the identified micro schools and also all other schools within the 30km radius of the identified micro schools on a GIS.
- (b) Identify catchment areas for the micro schools.
- (c) Identify any potential physical barriers between catchment areas and schools in the vicinity of micro schools per Section 11 below.
- (d) Identify potential schools into which the micro school(s) could be merged, i.e. potential Host Schools using the parameters set out under Section 11 below.
- (e) Identify micro schools that, potentially, would be allowed to continue operating and not closed down and merged with others based on the parameters set out under Section 12 below.
- (f) IPIT to confirm candidature of the identified potential Host Schools and micro schools that, technically, should be allowed to continue operating.

#### **TP-Step 2.2: Technical Condition Site Assessments**

- (a) IPIT together with P-SRRP-C to assess if in-house Technical Team (assisted by Work Inspectors at District) could conduct Technical Condition Site Assessments or if this activity should be outsourced to nearby Professional Service Providers (PSPs), based on the number of micro schools, Host Schools, catchment areas, topography and vastness of the area to be covered. If assessments are to be outsourced the IPIT to source relevant Professional Service Providers (PSPs) either from the Provincial Database of PSPs (if available), request for quotations or advertise, as the case might be, following the due procurement processes.

- (b) In-house Technical Team and/or appointed PSPs to assess, *inter alia*, the:
  - (i) Condition of the access roads, river crossing etc. from main road to the micro school;
  - (ii) Condition of the physical infrastructure at the identified micro schools;
  - (iii) Condition of access roads, potential physical barriers between the existing catchment areas and the identified potential Host Schools; and
  - (iv) Condition and adequacy of the physical infrastructure (Admin, core, specialist, and support spaces), systems, FFE, basic services, topography, and availability of land for additional structures to accommodate the micro schools to be brought on board.
- (c) Produce Technical Condition Assessment Report on the findings and present to the P-SRRP-C and D-SRRP-C for joint concurrence on the identified potential Host Schools and Micro Schools that will be allowed to continue operating, if any.
- (d) In assessing the Technical Report, the P-SRRP-C and D-SRRP-C to consider other strategic matters, over and above the technical considerations, that might require schools to be merged in a particular way to inform the “final” and rational recommendations to be made to the Member of Executive Council for Education (“the MEC”).

### TP-Step 2.3: Identification of Options and Preliminary Cost Estimates

- (a) The options that are available to deal with SRRP are:
  - (i) Leave the micro school as is and provide better infrastructure and amenities where these are insufficient or inappropriate. [The identified options for considering providing infrastructure are dealt with under Section 12 below. Where this option is considered, IPIT to review their Provincial Infrastructure Priority Lists and confirm when construction is most likely to commence at the micro schools that will be allowed to continue operating, or to consider reprioritising them where possible.]
  - (ii) Combine the micro school with an existing school or on a green-fields site and provide Learner Transport, if necessary.
  - (iii) Combine the micro school with an existing school or on a green-fields site and provide Learner Boarding Facilities, if necessary.
  - (iv) Combine the micro school with an existing school or on a green-fields site and provide both Learner Transport and Learner Boarding Facilities, if necessary.
- (b) IPIT to prepare Preliminary Cost Estimates for the most likely options that could be considered.
- (c) Where Learner Boarding Facilities would be provided, the Preliminary Cost Estimates should be based on Life-cycle Costing, reflecting both the Capital Expenditure (CAPEX) and Operating Expenditure (OPEX) over a 30-year period. The OPEX should include:
  - (i) Staff Costs (Boarding Master/Mistress, cooking and cleaning personnel);
  - (ii) Catering and Consumables;
  - (iii) General Upkeep and Maintenance Costs; and

- (iv) Capital Improvement Works required when the facility components have reached their Economic Service Lives.
- (d) IPIT to review their Provincial Infrastructure Priority Lists and indicate when the schools on the SRRP are likely to be attended to, based on the budget allocation.
- (e) IPIT to prepare a Summary Report on the outcomes of the Technical Assessment and present it to the P-SRRP-C and D-SRRP-C.

### Step 3: Legislative Processes-1 (LP1)

#### LP1-Step 3.1: Preparation of Submissions to MEC

- (a) P-SRRP-C and D-SRRP-C to prepare a submission for approval by the MEC with IPIT's reports appended. The submission should include:
  - (i) The names of all assessed micro schools that are proposed for closure and merger together with rationale for the proposed closures and mergers. (Please Note, this could be based on a cluster of schools that have been assessed in a particular region and not necessary all the identified schools in the Province. Others could be submitted over time as assessments on them are completed.)
  - (ii) Names of all micro schools that are not recommended for being closed down and merged, together with the rationale for such recommendations;
  - (iii) Names of schools into which the closed schools would be merged, i.e. Hosts Schools, together with rationale for choosing them; and
  - (iv) Implications of the proposals (CAPEX and OPEX - Infrastructure requirements for School Facility and for Learner Boarding Facility (where applicable), and Learner Transport requirements (where applicable)).
- (b) The MEC to review and consider the approval of the recommendations on the schools earmarked to be closed down and merged with others.

#### LP1-Step 3.2: Consultations and Formal Notices to the Interested and Affected Parties

- (a) The P-SRRP-C and D-SRRP-C to consult with the relevant Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) of the affected schools, as per Section 9(2)(b) above, to advise them on the intentions of the MEC to close down and to merge the identified schools.
- (b) The P-SRRP-C, or any other person identified by the MEC, to prepare, for approval and signature of the MEC, Written Notices to the School Principals and School Governing Bodies of micro schools earmarked for closures and mergers, indicating the intentions of the MEC to close down and merge the identified micro schools. Such Notices should reflect:
  - (i) The correct citation of Sections 12A and 33 of SASA:
    - (1) Where the schools are intended to be merged with other schools and closed down, reference should be made to "*Merger and Closure of ABC School per Sections 12A and 33 of SASA*"; and
    - (2) Where an existing school is intended to be a school into which other schools would be merged, i.e. Host School, reference should be made to "*Merger of ABC School with X and Y Schools per Section 12A of SASA*".

- (ii) The reasons for the proposed closures and mergers;
  - (iii) The names of schools that the schools to be closed down are earmarked to be merged with;
  - (iv) The provisions (e.g. Learner Transport and/or Learner Boarding Facility) to be considered to enable the closures and mergers to be realised; and
  - (v) Provide an opportunity for the affected schools to make Representations to the MEC within a period of not less than ninety (90) days from the date of the Written Notice.
- (c) Hand over the Written Notices to schools that are earmarked for closure and merger.
- (d) Where public micro schools are located in private properties, similar Written Notices to be prepared and sent to the respective landowners, advising them of:
- (i) The intentions of the MEC to close down and merge the identified schools; and
  - (ii) A need to review and renegotiate the terms and conditions of the Section 14 Agreements (per SASA) in instances where these would be impacted upon by the intended closures and mergers.
- (e) Prepare and publish a Written Notice in one or more newspapers, or similar, circulating in the area where the schools in question are situated:
- (i) Advising the parents, learners and general public, i.e. the I&APs, of the intentions of the MEC to close down and merge the identified micro schools;
  - (ii) Advising them of the reasons for the proposed closures and mergers;
  - (iii) Inviting comments from them; and
  - (iv) Giving them an opportunity to make Representations to the MEC within a period of not less than ninety (90) days from the date of the advertised Written Notice.
- (f) The P-SRRP-C and D-SRRP-C to make arrangements for public hearings to consider the Representations from the SGBs together with School Principals, and then from other I&APs, and to give reasonable notice period for the public hearings.
- (g) D-SRRP-C to summarise and communicate in writing the outcomes of the Representations to the entities who made submissions, and, where their Representations have not been acceded to, to advise them of their right to appeal in writing to the Minister of Basic Education ("the Minister") per Section 12A(7) of SASA.
- (h) The Minister to consider the appeals and respond to them within ninety (90) days of receipt of the Written Appeals.
- (i) P-SRRP-C to confirm the outcomes of the consultation process with the IPIT immediately after these consultations have been concluded so that the IPIT could start planning and budgeting for the requisite infrastructure provisioning.



## Step 4: Human Resource Management Processes (HR)

### HR-Step 4.1: Confirmation of Consultations with I&APs

- (a) Confirm that consultations with all the I&APs have been concluded, implying that:
  - (i) Written Notices were sent to all the I&APs;
  - (ii) Representations made to the MEC, where these were asked for and responded to; and
  - (iii) Appeals to the Minister, where these were made, have been resolved amicably.

### HR-Step 4.2: Arrangements for the affected SGBs

- (a) District SRRP Co-ordinator (D-SRRP-C) to initiate and lead the process of ensuring that all the issues pertaining to the SGBs of the schools affected by closures and mergers are resolved speedily and amicably per Section 12A(6) of SASA.
- (b) The process must include the establishment of both the interim governing body and the new governing body.
- (c) It is imperative that the chairpersons of both the interim and the new governing bodies be decided upon as one of the first activities.

#### S.12A(6) of SASA:

- (a) The governing bodies of the schools that are merged must have a meeting before the merger to constitute a single interim governing body comprising of all the members of the governing bodies concerned.
- (b) The interim governing body must decide on the budget and difference in codes of conduct and school fees, as well as any issue that is relevant to the merger or which is prescribed, until a new governing body is constituted in terms of Sections 23 and 28.

### HR-Step 4.3: Decisions and approvals on the business imperatives of the merged school.

A decision, for endorsement by the Provincial Education Department (PED), should be made by the joint Senior Management Team of the affected schools, the SGBs of the affected schools and the Education District Office on the:

- (a) Curriculum choice in terms of the subjects and/or phases to be offered at the merged school;
- (b) Language choice to be used in the merged school, taking into consideration the background and the needs of all the learners from all the schools earmarked for merger;
- (c) How the religious matters would be dealt with, where these need attention; and
- (d) Staff establishment for the merged school per Post Provisioning Norms (PPN).

### HR-Step 4.4: Decisions on the school branding and learner support to be provided.

A decision should be made by the joint Senior Management Team of the affected schools and SGBs of the affected schools on the:

- (a) Name of the merged school, if there is a need to change it from the current name of the Host School;
- (b) School uniform of the merged school; and
- (c) Nature of the assistance that might be provided to needy and destitute learners towards acquiring the “new” uniform of the merged school.

#### HR-Step 4.5: Communication by School Principals to their stakeholders

The Principals of all the schools affected by the mergers and closures should communicate, in their respective schools, the final outcomes of the items under HR-Steps 4.3 and 4.4 above to:

- (a) All the educators;
- (b) All the admin personnel and support staff;
- (c) All the learners; and
- (d) All the parents/guardians of learners in the affected schools.

#### HR-Step 4.6: Finalisation of HR processes pertaining to the School Senior Management Team

(a) The School Principal:

- (i) If the Principal of the Host School is graded higher than the Principal(s) of the school(s) earmarked for closure, then the Principal of the Host School would become the Principal of the merged school.
- (ii) If the Principal of the Host School is graded lower than the Principal(s) of the school(s) earmarked for closure, then the post of the Principal should be advertised, either as open or as closed vacancy post, doing so in the spirit of Section B.6.5.2 of the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) of 1996, as amended, and fairness towards the existing incumbents. The successful candidate would then become the Principal of the merged school.
- (iii) If the Principals of both the Host School and the schools earmarked for closure have the same grading, then the Last-In-First-Out (LIFO) Principle should be applied to decide on the Principal of the merged school.
- (iv) If the Principals of both the Host School and the school(s) earmarked for closure have the same grading and the same LIFO, then the post of the School Principal for the Host School should be advertised per the provisions of sub-section (ii) above.
- (v) After all the processes stated in sub-sections (i) to (iv) above have been concluded, the “unsuccessful” Principal(s) may be offered lower level post(s), at the Host School, within the current salary range they are at, pending the availability of such post(s) and the suitability of the incumbent(s).
- (vi) Where the “unsuccessful” Principal(s) cannot be accommodated in the Host School, then they should be transferred to other schools where there are vacancies, pending the suitability of the incumbents.

(b) The Deputy Principal(s):

The decision regarding the placement of the Deputy Principals should be dealt with in terms of Section B.6 of PAM.

(c) The Heads of Department:

The decision regarding the placement of the Heads of Department should be dealt with in terms of Section B.6 of PAM.

#### **HR-Step 4.7: Finalisation of HR processes pertaining Post Level 1 Teachers**

The decision regarding the placement of the Post Level 1 Teachers should be dealt with in terms of Section B.6 of PAM.

#### **HR-Step 4.8: Finalisation of HR processes pertaining to the Admin Personnel and Support Staff**

- (a) Where possible, means should be made to accommodate all the Admin Personnel and Support Staff at the Host School, subject to availability of posts.
- (b) In instances where any of the Admin Personnel and/or Support Staff cannot be accommodated at the Host School, then the LIFO Principle should be applied to decide on the incumbents from the school(s) earmarked for closure to be moved to the Host School.
- (c) If “excess” Admin Personnel and/or Support Staff of the school(s) earmarked for closure could not be accommodated for at the Host School, then they should be redeployed to other schools, subject to the availability of posts and the suitability of the incumbents.
- (d) In the event of any of the Admin Personnel and/or Support Staff not willing or unable to continue providing his/her services, or unable to find suitable alternative schools, then he/she should be offered his/her severance package, i.e. an employer initiated severance.

#### **HR-Step 4.9: Management of Relocation Costs**

Where applicable, all the relocation costs/assistance and/or compensation arrangements should be ascertained and decisions on the extent of assistance to be provided concluded, as they refer to any of the members of staff to be:

- (a) Relocated to the Host School;
- (b) Relocated to other schools; or
- (c) Services terminated.

#### **HR-Step 4.10: Management of Disagreements and/or Disputes**

- (a) Any disagreements and/or disputes in respect of any of the posts in the merged school, or on the selection and redeployment processes, or on the compensation mechanism must be dealt with, resolved and concluded according to the dispute resolution procedures of the Education Legal Resources Centre (ELRC) and/or General Public Services Sectoral Bargaining Council (GPSSBC).
- (b) The process of resolving any disagreements and/or disputes should not:
  - (i) Unduly delay the finalisation of the HR processes; and
  - (ii) Intentionally hold the process to ransom.

### **Step 5: Infrastructure Provisioning Processes (IPP)**

#### **IPP-Step 5.1: Infrastructure Planning**

- (a) The provision of requisite infrastructure in the identified schools (Host Schools and micro schools that will be allowed to continue operating) should be facilitated by the Provincial Infrastructure Planning and Implementing Team (IPIT) working together with the P-SRRP-C and the D-SRRP-C.
- (b) Infrastructure plans shall include the provision of:

- (i) Adequate number of admin, core, specialist and support functional spaces in the Host School;
  - (ii) Learner Boarding Facilities, where required; and
  - (iii) Decommissioning properly the schools to be shut down.
- (c) The capital works at the Host School should entail providing:
- (i) Adequate number of classrooms with sufficient floor area and built of appropriate materials, per the provisions of *MUNAS-PSI*;
  - (ii) Adequate admin and staff-room spaces to accommodate the additional educators and admin staff;
  - (iii) Adequate specialist and support functional spaces to support the business needs of the Host School;
  - (iv) Upgrades, alterations and refurbishments that might be required on the existing structures including replacement of structures that might have been built of inappropriate materials;
  - (v) Amenities to cater for Inclusive Education (Inclusive designs to cater for People with Disabilities), where these did not exist, or where these were inadequate;
  - (vi) Adequate and appropriate furniture, fittings and equipment (FFE) for all the learners, educators, admin and support staff;
  - (vii) Adequate basic services, per the provisions of *MUNAS-PSI*, and these include:
    - (1) Adequate number of ablution facilities of acceptable standards, i.e. safe and built of appropriate materials and no pit latrines, mobile or chemical toilets, subject to provisions of Section 15.2.4 below;
    - (2) Sufficient potable water; and
    - (3) Adequate power supply.
  - (viii) Support systems such as:
    - (1) Safety and Security Systems per provisions of the *School Infrastructure Safety and Security Guidelines*;
    - (2) Fire Protection Systems; and
    - (3) ICT and communication systems.
- (d) Provisioning of purpose-built Learner Boarding Facilities that include:
- (i) Adequate floor area to accommodate the required number of beds, avoiding cramping and overcrowding;
  - (ii) Furniture, Fittings and Equipment (FFE) for learners, admin staff and support staff;
  - (iii) Provisions for People with Disabilities;
  - (iv) Sufficient and appropriate basic services; and
  - (v) Recreational facilities.

- (e) Confirmation of sufficient budget to provide all the infrastructure requirements per the assessments carried out as part of Step 2 (TP-Step 2.2 and 2.3) above.

#### IPP-Step 5.2: Procurement, Design and Documentation

- (a) Procure services of Service Providers to carry out the designs and documentation, and construction work following the applicable procurement policies and regulations.
- (b) The scope of work for the appointed contractor should include the relocation of specified items from the schools that are earmarked for closure to the Host Schools, per Step 6 (AP-Step 6.7) below.
- (c) Contract and transact with the successful Service Providers.

#### IPP-Step 5.3: Construction and Close-out

- (a) Carry out all the construction activities per the design specifications.
- (b) Where required, provide adequate temporary facilities to enable any refurbishment work to be carried out on the existing structures.
- (c) Minimise any disturbances and disruption of services during school hours.
- (d) Ensure that Occupational Health and Safety Standards, per the provisions of the OSHA, are adhered to during the construction activities for the safety of workers, educators, learners, admin and support staff.
- (e) Ensure that environmental issues are managed properly during construction, per the provisions of the National Environmental Protection Act.

#### IPP-Step 5.4: Commissioning and Decommissioning

- (a) The appointed Service Providers to assist with relocation of usable movable assets, teaching and learning material, and any other identified items from the schools to be closed down to the Host Schools.
- (b) The remaining infrastructure and public facility in the school to be closed down should be addressed as follows:

- (i) Where the school is on public property:
  - (1) Ensure that the provisions of Sections 12A, 33, 37 and 58 of SASA are adhered to;
  - (2) Demolish the building and make good the site if such structures were built of inappropriate materials or are no longer fit for use because of state of disrepair and deterioration;
  - (3) Transfer the facility to another government department, where required, ensuring that due processes have been followed; or

- **S.12A(5):** All assets, liabilities, rights and obligations of the schools that are merged, must, subject to the conditions of any donation, bequest or trust contemplated in Section 37(4), vest in the single school.
- **S.33(3):** If a public school is closed in terms of Subsection 33(1) all assets and liabilities of such school must, subject to the conditions of any donation, bequest or trust contemplated in Section 37(4), devolve on the State unless otherwise agreed between the *Member of the Executive Council* and the *Governing Body* of the school.
- **S.37(4):** Money or other goods donated or bequeathed to or received in trust by a public school must be applied in accordance with the conditions of such donation, bequest or trust.
- **S.58A(2):** No person may dispose of any assets owned by a *public school* to another person or body without the written approval of the *Member of the Executive Council*.

- (4) Transfer the facility to local community structures, where required, ensuring that due processes have been followed.
- (ii) Where the school is on a private property:
  - (1) Vacate the building, making good the applicable areas per the provisions of the Section 14 Agreement, if any;
  - (2) Relocate the movable assets owned by the school and manage them per the provisions of Section 12A(5) and 33(3) of SASA;
  - (3) Adhere to the provisions of Section 16(6) below.
- (c) The process of addressing the vacated school buildings after they have been closed down, having the learners and educators been moved to the Host School, must be completed within six (6) months of the facility been vacated, per Section 16 below. This is intended to:
  - (i) Prevent the facility from being vandalised;
  - (ii) Address occupational health and safety issues in event of dilapidated and/or unsafe structures; and
  - (iii) Any unwanted activities taking place in the vacated facilities.

## Step 6: Administrative Processes (AP)

### AP-Step 6.1: *Provision of Learner Transport*

- (a) The P-SRRP-C together with D-SRRP-C must make arrangements with the relevant Department of Transport (DoT) for the learners to be provided with safe and reliable transport, where applicable.
- (b) Such transport arrangements would be informed by the most cost effective and sustainable option arrived at per Step 2 (TP-Step 2.3) above.
- (c) Where the Learner Transport would be provided at the Host School post the closures and mergers, and where:
  - (i) Such services were provided at the Host School prior to the merger and closure process, the funds allocated for Learner Transport at the Host School after the mergers and closures should be increased by the DoT proportionately to the number of additional learners to be provided for; and
  - (ii) Such services were not provided at the Host School prior to the mergers and closures, new allocations must be made by the DoT to cater for the Learner Transport at the Host School.
- (d) The D-SRRP-C should advise the DoT as soon as the need for the Learner Transport at the Host School has been confirmed to allow them sufficient time (ideally, where possible, at least a year in advance) to make the necessary arrangements, including budget allocation.
- (e) The transport arrangements should be inclusive of all the learners at the Host School and not prejudice against learners who were at the Host School prior to the closure and merger, where a need for such assistance is required.

### AP-Step 6.2: *Registration of the new Host School*

In instances where the Host School would be established on a new green-fields site, per Section 11(4) below, such new Host School must be registered:

- (a) With the Department of Basic Education (DBE) before construction commences, where a new EMIS Number would be issued; and
- (b) By the relevant Department of Public Works (DPW) on the Government Immovable Asset Register after construction work has been completed.

#### **AP-Step 6.3: Management of Staff Establishments on PERSAL**

- (a) All the preparations must be made by the District Director and notifications sent to the PERSAL Controller in the Provincial Education Department (PED) on a need to stop and close the components and pay points of the closed schools on PERSAL immediately after the teachers, administrative and support staff of the schools earmarked for closure have been moved from the closed schools and new components and pay points to be opened as part of the staff establishment of the Host School.
- (b) The PERSAL Controller in the PED must be informed in writing by the District Director within seven (7) working days of closure of the schools that have been merged and that he/she should proceed with the stoppage and closure of the components and pay points of the closed schools and open new ones as part of the staff establishment of the Host School.
- (c) Once the PERSAL Controller has created the new components and pay points under the Host School, the District HR Officials should proceed and capture the names of the teachers, admin and support staff who have been redeployed to the Host School against the Host School.
- (d) The DBE must be informed in writing by the PED of the stoppage and closure of the components and pay points of the closed schools and on the opening of new components and pay points as part of the staff establishment of the Host School. Such correspondence must be directed to the Director: Education Human Resource Planning, Provisioning and Monitoring.

#### **AP-Step 6.4: Reclassification of the Host School**

- (a) The classification of the Host School must be assessed and, where necessary, reclassified as either a Fee-paying or a Non-fee Paying School, taking into consideration the classification of all the affected schools prior to earmarked merger and closure.
- (b) All the admin processes and funding arrangements commensurate with the reclassified Host School must be initiated and concluded by the District Director, being facilitated by the D-SRRP-C, in line with the *National Norms and Standards for School Funding*, for approval by the PED.

#### **AP-Step 6.5: Amalgamation of the National School Nutrition Programmes**

- (a) Where the schools earmarked for closure were beneficiaries of the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP), the allocation of School Nutrition Funds against such schools must be stopped immediately after the learners have been moved to the Host School.
- (b) The allocation of School Nutrition Funds at the merged school must be increased, amalgamating the funds of both the Host School and the schools that have been closed down.
- (c) Where the closure and merger occur during the course of the school calendar year, where the NSNP Funds had already been transferred into the dedicated bank accounts of the schools to be closed down, the D-SRRP-C must facilitate the process of closure of such bank accounts and transfer of the remaining funds into the dedicated NSNP bank account of the Host School.



- (d) Where the schools to be closed down were not beneficiaries of the NSNP but the Host School was a beneficiary, then the NSNP Funds allocated to the Host School and associated resources for preparing meals and for feeding learners (e.g. equipment, utensils, etc.) should be increased proportionately to cater for the additional learners.
- (e) Where the Host School was not a beneficiary of the NSNP prior to the closures and mergers and the schools to be closed down and merged were beneficiaries of the NSNP, then an assessment of the Host School should be carried out and necessary allocation of the NSNP Funds and associated resources for preparing meals and for feeding the learners be made available, i.e. if such resources were not available at the Host School or inadequate, such that the learners in the Host School post closures and mergers are not disadvantaged.
- (f) In case where the micro schools earmarked for closure were beneficiaries of the NSNP, the closure of such schools would affect not only the learners but also the appointed NSNP personnel such as the Volunteer Food Handlers and contracted Service Providers to provide food supplies. Then where the earmarked closures are likely to take place during the tenure of their contracts:
  - (i) The NSNP personnel should be dealt with according to Step 4 (HR Step 4.8) and, where deemed appropriate, determination be made on the reasonable compensation to be made for early termination of their contracts;
  - (ii) The contracted Service Providers should be advised of the imminent closure of the micro school at least three (3) months in advance or as provided for in their Service Delivery Agreements.
- (g) The processes stated in sub-sections (a) to (f) above must be co-ordinated and scheduled properly with the schools concerned by the NSNP Provincial Co-ordinators together with D-SRRP-C to manage the transition issues such that:
  - (i) No “excess” food supplies are left at the schools that have been closed down;
  - (ii) Learners at the schools earmarked for closure continue to be provided with regular meals until they have left the schools to be closed down; and
  - (iii) Contracts with the NSNP personnel and contracted Service Providers are not terminated before the learners are moved to the Host School and no new “long-term” contracts are entered into if the closure of the micro school is imminent;
  - (iv) There are sufficient food supplies, cooking equipment, eating utensils, and adequate number Food Handlers at the Host School to cater for additional learners from the schools that would have been closed down immediately upon being transferred to the Host School.
- (h) The P-SRRP-C must advise the DBE NSNP Directorate and the NSNP Provincial Co-ordinators immediately of the intentions and a need to terminate NSNP provisions at the school(s) to be closed down and of the arrangements to be made at the Host School.
- (i) Where applicable, all the HR matters associated with the NSNP personnel, contracted Service Providers, NSNP Funds allocations and provision of NSNP resources to the Host Schools should be managed by the NSNP Provincial Co-ordinators, with the P-SRRP-C overseeing the overall process for central co-ordination and smooth transition.

#### **AP-Step 6.6: Review of Allocations for General Upkeep and Maintenance activities**

- (a) Where the Host School is an existing school, the allocation of funds for General Upkeep and Maintenance

activities should be reviewed following the increase in the learner numbers and the additional functional spaces to be looked after and maintained at the Host School.

- (b) The personnel required for General Upkeep and Maintenance activities should also be reviewed per the provisions of the *Guidelines for General Upkeep and Maintenance of Education Facilities*.

#### **AP-Step 6.7: Relocation of Personnel and Goods to the Host School**

- (a) Once all the infrastructural arrangements have been finalised at the Host School for accommodating the learners and the staff from the schools earmarked for closure and all the HR and Admin processes been finalised, the schools to be closed down must be assisted with the physical relocation processes to the Host School.
- (b) The relocation processes for the schools to be closed down should include the following:
  - (i) Making arrangements for any fittings together with large and delicate equipment, and any other specified items to be moved from the schools to be closed down for re-use at the Host School. Such items must be identified, specified and included as part of the contract of the contractor to be appointed to carry out the infrastructure works at the Host School preparing for the merger and for receiving the additional learners and staff from the schools to be closed down.
  - (ii) Where no construction work would be required at the Host School because of appropriate and sufficient capacity to accommodate additional learners, educators, admin and support staff from the school(s) to be closed down, then another Service Provider other than a contractor should be procured to assist with the relocation activities.
  - (iii) The deliverables associated with relocation activities should include:
    - (1) Taking off all such items from the fixtures;
    - (2) Packaging and packing all the items to be relocated;
    - (3) Transporting the items to the Host School;
    - (4) Refurbishing and/or fixing any items that require such (could use sub-contractors to do that work);
    - (5) Installing the items at the Host School; and
    - (6) Commissioning them.
  - (iv) The timing of the activities stated under sub-section (b)(i) and (ii) above must be carefully planned and agreed upon ahead of time with the School Principals of the affected schools to minimise any potential disturbances to the teaching and learning activities.
  - (v) The D-SRRP-C should facilitate the process of ensuring that the District Office has made the necessary payment arrangements for the relocation of any other items that are not part of sub-section (b)(i) above, moving them from the schools to be closed down to the Host School. The deliverables associated with this assignment shall include packaging, packing, transporting, off-loading and placing/installing such items in the areas identified by the Host School. Such items would include, but not limited to:
    - (1) All the Learning and Teaching Support Materials;

- (2) All the material used as part of the general support services;
- (3) All the sport and recreational material and equipment; and
- (4) Furniture, equipment and tools.
- (vi) Where a Learner Boarding Facility for use by the learners from the schools earmarked for closure has been provided at the Host School, the District Office should make all the necessary arrangements including payments for the transportation of the needy learners and their belongings from their homesteads to the Host School Learner Boarding Facility.
- (vii) Where a learner opts to attend a different school other than the Host School, then such learner shall make his/her own relocation arrangements to such alternative school and pay for them, unless agreed otherwise by the School Governing Bodies and the District Office.
- (viii) The District Office shall make all the necessary arrangements and pay for the relocation costs of the teachers, admin personnel and support staff that are earmarked to be moved either to the Host School or to alternative schools in accordance with the applicable agreements in the ELRC and the Public Sector Collective Bargaining Council (PSCBC).
- (ix) All the items in the schools earmarked for closure that will not be used in the Host School shall be dealt with in accordance with Sections 12A, 37 and 58A of SASA.

#### **AP-Step 6.8: *Deregistration of Schools that have been Closed Down***

- (a) Once a school has been closed down, with teachers and learners relocated to the Host School, the vacated schools must be closed down and formally deregistered on the education systems which include EMIS and SA-SAMS.
- (b) Although the schools that have been closed down would be deregistered per sub-section (a) above, the names of such schools should still be reflected on the EMIS but indicated as “closed down”. This will enable proper and full record keeping for future reference.
- (c) The process of deregistering a school shall be co-ordinated by the D-SRRP-C for approval by the PED.
- (d) Such closure and request for deregistration shall be communicated formally by the PED to the DBE.

#### **AP-Step 6.9: *Deregistration of Closed School on the Government Immovable Asset Register***

- (a) The P-SRRP-C should facilitate the process of having the school that has been closed down deregistered on the Government Immovable Asset Register by the Department of Public Works.
- (b) Although the schools that have been closed down would be deregistered per sub-section (a) above, the names of such schools should still be reflected on the Government Immovable Asset Register but indicated either as “closed down” or “transferred to another entity”. This will enable proper and full record keeping for future reference.
- (c) If the facility is handed over to another government entity, it should then be listed as part of immovable assets belonging to the said government entity.
- (d) The process of deregistering schools that have been closed down should be concluded within six (6) months of closure of such schools.

### **Step 7: Employee Wellness and Support Processes (WSP)**

### **WSP-Step 7.1: Development of Employee Wellness and Assistance Plans**

- (a) The employee assistance programme of the province must support educators moving from the closed micro schools to the Host Schools. This support must be extended to professional support by District Offices regarding the management of larger classroom sizes, assessment approaches and other potential curriculum challenges.
- (b) The support referred to in sub-section (a) above should also be extended to administrative and non-educator staff.
- (c) District Offices must ensure additional support for learners and the parents of the learners moving from the closed micro schools to Host Schools. Educators must also accommodate the different learning needs of learners that move from smaller schools into larger merged schools.
- (d) The nature of the required wellness support and assistance needed by the staff members will vary from one Host School to the next and therefore specific support needs of the personnel at each Host School must be assessed by the Senior Management Team of the merged school together with the District Office where this process would be facilitated by the D-SRRP-C.
- (e) Where a need for support and assistance has been identified, a comprehensive Employee Support Plan for each Host School must be developed by the Senior Management Team of the Host School and District Office within two (2) weeks of merger, having observed the situation on the ground. The Employee Support Plan should, as a minimum, cover the following:
  - (i) List of all the educator and non-educator staff at the Host School that need assistance and support, as occasioned by the merger;
  - (ii) Identified problem areas and proposed interventions in terms of the required assistance and support;
  - (iii) Duration over which the wellness support and/or professional assistance would be provided;
  - (iv) Proposed approach on how such support and/or assistance would be provided, e.g. in-sourced, out-sourced or a combination;
  - (v) Cost estimates of the identified intervention;
  - (vi) Expected outcomes of the intervention; and
  - (vii) Monitoring mechanism to assess the progress and the effectiveness of the intervention.
- (f) The Employee Support Plan must be submitted to the PED for approval and, where necessary, for providing the necessary funding to enable its implementation.
- (g) The copy of the Employee Support Plan should be made available to the DBE and could also be shared with relevant Teacher Unions in the relevant Provincial Education Labour Relations Council.

### **WSP-Step 7.2: Implementation and Monitoring of Wellness and Employee Support Programme**

- (a) The Employee Support Plan should be implemented as planned to ensure that the necessary support is afforded to the entities identified in the plan.
- (b) The P-SRRP-C assisted by the D-SRRP-C should:
  - (i) Monitor the implementation of the Employee Support Plan;

- (ii) Assess the realisation of its objectives;
- (iii) Where necessary, assist and/or advise the Host Schools with the implementation of the Employee Support Plan; and
- (iv) Suggest any modifications where necessary.

#### Step 8: Legislative Processes-2 (LP2)

##### LP2-Step 8.1: *Gazetting the Closed and Merged Schools*

- (a) The D-SRRP-C should facilitate the process of having the schools that have been closed down and merged with other schools published in a Provincial Government Gazette.
- (b) Such Provincial Gazette should be published within a period of six (6) months after such schools have been closed down and merged.

## 10.2 School Re-alignment Process

### 10.2.1 General Considerations for School Re-alignment

- (1) Regulation 5 of *Minimum Uniform Norms and Standards for Public School Infrastructure* (MUNAS-PSI) identifies:
  - (a) Types (Primary and Secondary) and sizes (per Learner Enrolment Figures) of schools to be provided in the basic education sector;
  - (b) Grades to be accommodated in these types of schools to be provided (Grades R to 7 in Primary Schools, and Grades 8 to 12 in Secondary Schools); and
  - (c) Number of learners to be accommodated in each class (maximum of 30 learners per class for Grade R and a maximum of 40 for other Grades).
- (2) The School Re-alignment Process considers the fact that different configurations of schools were pursued by various PEDs before the *MUNAS-PSI* was gazetted.
- (3) **The main focus of the School Re-Alignment Process is to ensure that, existing schools are aligned with the provisions of Regulation 5 of *MUNAS-PSI*.**
- (4) Generally, the 7 SRRP Processes identified under Figure 4 in Section 10.1.1 above will also apply when dealing with the School Re-alignment Process.
- (5) Per Regulation 5(7) of *MUNAS-PSI*, there might be instances where it might be more beneficial to combine Primary and Secondary Schools, leading to the establishment of Combined Schools, pending the approval of an MEC.

### 10.2.2 Procedures for Re-alignment of Public Schools

#### Step 1: Institutional Processes (IP)

##### IP-Step 1.1: Setting Up Institutional Structure, Systems and Processes for SRRP

- (a) The processes that are contemplated under Section 10.1.2, IP-Step1.1 above, would be applicable.
- (b) The P-SRRP-C and D-SRRP-C would also be responsible for managing and co-ordinating the School Re-alignment Process.

##### IP-Step 1.2: Confirmation of EMIS and SA-SAMS Information

- (a) All the schools in each Province are expected to have loaded basic information about their schools on the SA-SAMS. This information would include the type of school, grades provided for, and Learner Enrolment Figures (LEFs).
- (b) D-SRRP-C to assess if all the schools have updated their information on the SA-SAMS and if the information is reasonably correct and to provide assistance to schools where this has not been achieved.

##### IP-Step1.3: Creation of Baseline Information for the School Re-alignment Process

- (a) D-SRRP-C to obtain information from SA-SAMS on all the schools in his/her District that have not been re-aligned and forward such list to P-SRRP-C;

- (b) P-SRRP-C and D-SRRP-C to analyse the information on each school, identifying:
  - (i) Grades to be moved to correct type of school;
  - (ii) Number of learners to be moved; and
  - (iii) Nearest schools the misaligned Grades to be moved to.
- (c) Engage the Provincial Infrastructure Planning and Implementing Team (IPIT) to conduct Technical Assessments on the schools to which the misaligned grades would be moved, following the Technical Processes under Step 2 below.

## Step 2: Technical Processes (TP)

### TP-Step 2.1: *Technical Condition Site Assessments*

- (a) IPIT together with P-SRRP-C to assess if in-house Technical Team (assisted by Work Inspectors at District) could conduct Technical Condition Site Assessments or if this activity should be outsourced to nearby appointed Professional Service Providers (PSPs), based on the number of schools to be re-aligned, topography and vastness of the area to be covered. If assessments are to be outsourced the IPIT to source relevant PSPs from the database of PSPs, following the due procurement processes.
- (b) In-house Technical Team and/or appointed PSPs to visit each school into which the misaligned grades would be moved, i.e. the Receiving Schools, to assess the condition and adequacy of the physical infrastructure (admin, core, specialist, and support), systems, FFE, basic services, topography, and availability of land for additional functional spaces required to accommodate the misaligned grades.
- (c) Produce Technical Assessment Report on the findings and present to the P-SRRP-C and D-SRRP-C for joint concurrence on the identified potential Receiving Schools and/or establishment of Combined Schools based on the learner enrolment figures (LEF).

### TP-Step 2.2: *Development of Preliminary Cost Estimates*

- (a) IPIT to prepare Preliminary Cost Estimates for:
  - (i) Upgrading existing structures at the Receiving School to accommodate the grades to be re-aligned;
  - (ii) Providing additional functional spaces;
  - (iii) Providing the required FFE;
  - (iv) Providing adequate basic services; and
  - (v) Providing and/or upgrading the systems.
- (b) IPIT to review their Infrastructure Priority Lists and indicate when the schools earmarked as Receiving Schools are planned to be attended to, based on the budget allocation. IPIT to also consider potential re-prioritisation where possible and where necessary.
- (c) IPIT to prepare a Summary Report on Preliminary Cost Estimates and present it to P-SRRP-C and D-SRRP-C.



**LP1-Step 3.1: Preparation of Submissions to MEC**

- (a) P-SRRP-C and D-SRRP-C to prepare a submission for approval by the MEC, having attached the Technical Team's reports. The submission should include:
  - (i) List of all the schools that are misaligned;
  - (ii) List of potential Receiving Schools;
  - (iii) Implications of the proposed re-alignment (Movement of learners and teachers, infrastructure requirements and cost implications); and
  - (iv) Proposed implementation plan based on the budget availability.
- (b) The MEC to review and consider approving the recommendations on the schools earmarked to be re-aligned.

**LP1-Step 3.2: Consultations and Formal Notices to Interested and Affected Parties**

- (a) The P-SRRP-C and D-SRRP-C to consult with the relevant Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) of the affected schools, per Section 9(2)(b) above, on the intentions of the MEC to re-align the identified schools.
- (b) The P-SRRP-C, or any other person identified by the MEC, to prepare, for approval and signature of the MEC, Written Notices to the School Principals and School Governing Bodies of schools earmarked for re-alignment indicating the intentions of the MEC to re-align the identified schools.
- (c) The Written Notices to be sent to schools with misaligned Grades to include:
  - (i) The reasons for the proposed re-alignment;
  - (ii) The schools that the misaligned Grades from other schools will be moved to, i.e. the Receiving School;
  - (iii) The potential implications of the re-alignment process especially on Learner Enrolment Figures, Funding Allocation (per NNSSF), Post Provisioning (per PPN), National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP), and School General Upkeep and Maintenance Allocation;
  - (iv) The provisions to be made for the learners to be moved to Receiving Schools such as Learner Transport arrangements, additional facilities to be provided at the Receiving School, and additional educators to be provided;
  - (v) The date on which the proposed move is anticipated to take place;
  - (vi) Provide an opportunity for the I&APs to make Representations to the MEC within a period of not less than ninety (90) days from the date of the Written Notice.
- (d) Written Notices to be sent to the Receiving Schools to include:
  - (i) The reasons for the proposed re-alignment;
  - (ii) The names of schools from which the misaligned Grades would be moved;
  - (iii) The potential implications of the re-alignment process especially on Learner Enrolment Figures,

Additional Staff requirements, Identified Infrastructure requirements, Funding Allocation, Staff Provisioning, NSNP, and General Upkeep and Maintenance Allocation;

- (iv) The provisions to be made for the learners to be moved to the Receiving School, such as Learner Transport arrangements, where necessary;
  - (v) The date on which the move is anticipated to take place;
  - (vi) Provide an opportunity for I&APs to make Representations to the MEC within a period of not less than ninety (90) days from the date of the written Notice.
- (e) Where the affected schools are located on private properties, Written Notices to be prepared and sent to the respective landowners, advising them of:
- (i) Intentions of the MEC to re-align the identified schools; and
  - (ii) Need to review the terms and conditions of the Section 14 Agreements (per SASA) in instances where these would be affected by the intended re-alignment process.
- (f) Publish a Written Notice in one or more newspapers, or similar, circulating in the area where the affected schools are situated:
- (i) Advising the parents, learners and general public, i.e. the I&APs of the intentions to re-align the identified misaligned schools;
  - (ii) Advising them of the reasons for the proposed re-alignment process; and
  - (iii) Give the I&APs an opportunity to make Representations to the MEC within a period of not less than ninety (90) days from the date of the advertised Notice.
- (g) P-SRRP-C and D-SRRP-C to make arrangements for public hearings to consider the Representations from the SGBs together with School Principals and from the I&APs and to give reasonable notice period for the public hearing.
- (h) Summarise and communicate in writing the outcomes of the Representations to the entities who made submissions.

## Step 4: Human Resource Management Processes (HR)

### HR-Step 4.1: Confirmation of Consultations with all the Interested and Affected Parties

- (a) P-SRRP-C to confirm that consultations with all the relevant stakeholders have been concluded, notifications sent to all the I&APs, and Representations made and resolved amicably.
- (b) Where the consultations have not been addressed sufficiently, to conclude that process prior to proceeding with the HR Processes.

### HR-Step 4.2: Decisions on the school branding and learner support to be provided

A decision should be made by the joint Senior Management Team of the affected schools and SGBs of the affected schools, for approval of the PED on the:

- (a) Name of the affected schools, more especially on the use of “Primary School”, “Secondary School” and “Combined School” suffixes;
- (b) Nature of the assistance that might be provided to needy and destitute learners to be moved to Receiving Schools to acquire “new” uniform; and
- (c) Identified need for Learner Transport.

### HR-Step 4.3: Communication by Principals to their stakeholders

The Principals of all the schools affected by the re-alignment process to communicate, in their respective schools, the final outcomes of the items under HR-Steps 4.2 above to all the:

- (a) Educators;
- (b) Admin personnel and support staff;
- (c) Learners; and
- (d) Parents/guardians of learners in the affected schools.

### HR-Step 4.4: Arrangements for Deputy Principals and Heads of Department

- (a) Where a need has been identified for additional Deputy Principal(s) and/or Heads of Department and approved by the PED, such posts should be advertised on the normal platforms per Section B.5 of Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM).
- (b) The appointment of the successful candidates must be concluded before any learners are moved to the Receiving Schools.
- (c) Where, as a result of reduction of learners and Grades in the re-aligned school there are more Deputy Principals and/or Heads of Department than the required Post Provisioning Norms, the decision regarding their placement should be dealt with in accordance with Section B.6 of PAM.

### HR-Step 4.5: Finalisation of HR processes pertaining for Post Level 1 Teachers

- (a) In the event of insufficient number of Post Level 1 Teachers at the Receiving School, per the Staff Establishment requirements after the re-alignment process, then the principle of Teachers-Following-Learners should be applied.

- (b) To identify the Post Level 1 Teachers from Re-aligned School(s) that should follow the learners to the Receiving School(s), Section B.6 of PAM should be applied by the Re-aligned School(s).
- (c) The Post Level 1 Teachers that would be identified in terms of sub-section (b) above should then be moved to the Receiving School as a first option.
- (d) In the event of a less number of additional Post Level 1 Teachers been required in the Receiving School, per the Staff Establishment requirements, thereby not able to accommodate all the teachers from the Re-aligned School(s), then the LIFO Principle should be applied to decide on the teachers to be moved from the Re-aligned School to the Receiving School, also subject to their profile(s) to match the grades and the curriculum choices.
- (e) No other “new” Post Level 1 Teacher(s) from outside should be appointed in the vacant post(s) in the Receiving School occasioned by the re-alignment process unless all the teachers from the Re-aligned School have been accommodated in the respective Receiving School or were given an opportunity to do so but declined it.
- (f) Any “excess” Post Level 1 Teachers that could not be accommodated at the Receiving School should be redeployed to other school(s) subject to the availability of vacant posts and the suitability of the incumbents.

#### **HR-Step 4.6: Decisions on the Admin Personnel and Support Staff**

- (a) Where possible, endeavours should be made to accommodate all the “excess” Admin Personnel and Support Staff from the Re-aligned School at the Receiving School, subject to the availability of vacant posts and suitability of incumbents.
- (b) In instances where any of the Admin Personnel and/or Support Staff cannot be accommodated at the Receiving School, then the LIFO Principle should be applied to decide on the incumbents from the Re-aligned School to be moved to the Receiving School.
- (c) If “excess” Admin Personnel and/or Support Staff from the Re-aligned School could not be accommodated at the Receiving School, then they should be redeployed to other schools, subject to the availability of vacant posts and the suitability of the incumbents.
- (d) In the event of any “excess” Admin Personnel or Support Staff not willing or unable to continue providing his/her services, or unable to find suitable alternative schools, then he/she should be offered his/her severance package.

#### **HR-Step 4.7: Management of Relocation Costs**

Where applicable, the relocation costs/assistance and/or compensation arrangements should be made for the affected members of staff, as they relate to any of the members of staff to be:

- (a) Relocated to the Receiving School;
- (b) Relocated to other schools; or
- (c) Services terminated.

#### HR-Step 4.8: Management of Disagreements and/or Disputes

- (a) Any disagreement and/or disputes in respect of any of the posts at the Receiving School, or on the selection and redeployment processes, or on the compensation mechanism must be dealt with, resolved and concluded according to the dispute resolution procedures of the Education Legal Resources Centre (ELRC) and/or General Public Services Sectoral Bargaining Council (GPSSBC);
- (b) The process of resolving disagreements and/or disputes should not:
  - (i) Unduly delay the re-alignment process; and/or
  - (ii) Intentionally hold the re-alignment process to ransom.

#### Step 5: Infrastructure Provisioning Processes (IPP)

##### IPP-Step 5.1: Infrastructure Planning

- (a) Infrastructure plans shall include providing adequate number of admin, core, specialist and support functional spaces at the Receiving School.
- (b) The provision of functional spaces at the Receiving School should entail:
  - (i) Adequate number of classrooms with sufficient floor area and built of appropriate materials, per the provisions of *MUNAS-PSI*;
  - (ii) Adequate admin and staff-room spaces to accommodate the additional educators and admin staff;
  - (iii) Adequate specialist and support functional spaces to support the business needs of the Receiving School;
  - (iv) Upgrades, alterations and refurbishments that might be required on the existing structures including replacement of structures that might be built of inappropriate materials;
  - (v) Provision of amenities to cater for Inclusive Education, where these did not exist, or where these were inadequate;
  - (vi) Provision of adequate and appropriate furniture, fittings and equipment (FFE) for all the learners, educators, admin and support staff;
  - (vii) Provision adequate basic services, per the provisions of *MUNAS-PSI*, and these include:
    - (1) Adequate number of ablution facilities of acceptable standards, i.e. safe and built of appropriate materials and no pit latrines, mobile or chemical toilets, subject to provisions of Section 15.2.4 below;
    - (2) Sufficient potable water; and
    - (3) Adequate power supply.
  - (viii) Provision of support systems such as:
    - (1) Safety and Security Systems per provisions of the *School Infrastructure Safety and Security Guidelines*;
    - (2) Fire Protection Systems; and

- (3) ICT and communication systems.
- (c) Confirmation of sufficient budget to provide all the infrastructure requirements per the assessments carried out as part of Step 2 (TP-Step 2.2) above.

#### **IPP-Step 5.2: Procurement, Design and Documentation**

- (a) Procure services of Service Providers to carry out the designs and documentation, and construction work following the applicable procurement policies.
- (b) Contract and transact with the successful Service Providers.

#### **IPP-Step 5.3: Construction and Close-out**

- (a) Carry out all the construction activities per the technical specifications.
- (b) Where required, provide adequate temporary facilities to enable any refurbishment work to be carried out on the existing structures.
- (c) Minimise any disturbances and disruption of services during school hours.
- (d) Ensure that Occupational Health and Safety Standards per the provisions of the OSHA are adhered to during construction for the safety of the workers, educators, learners, admin and support staff.
- (e) Ensure that environmental issues are managed properly during construction, per the provisions of the National Environmental Protection Act.

#### **IPP-Step 5.4: Commissioning and Decommissioning**

- (a) The appointed Service Providers should assist with relocation of usable movable assets, LTSM, from the schools to be closed down to the Receiving Schools per Step 6 (AP-Step 6.5(b)) below.

### **Step 6: Administrative Processes (AP)**

#### **AP-Step 6.1: Provision of Learner Transport**

- (a) Where required, the P-SRRP-C together with D-SRRP-C should make arrangements with the relevant Department of Transport for the learners from the Re-aligned Schools to be provided with safe and reliable transport.
- (b) In making arrangements for Learner Transport, the processes that are dealt with under Section 10.1.2, AP-Step 6.1 above should be followed when dealing with the re-alignment process.
- (c) The transport arrangements should be inclusive of all learners at the Receiving School and not prejudice against the “original” learners where a need for such assistance has been identified.

#### **AP-Step 6.2: Management of Staff Establishments on PERSAL**

- (a) All the preparations must be made by the District Director and notifications sent to the PERSAL Controller in the Provincial Education Department (PED) on a need to stop and close the components and pay points of the Re-aligned School on PERSAL immediately after the teachers and administrative staff of the affected schools have been moved to the Receiving School and new components and pay points to be opened as part of the staff establishment of the Receiving School.
- (b) The PERSAL Controller in the PED must be informed in writing by the District Director within seven (7)

working days of conclusion of the Re-alignment Processes and that he/she should proceed with the stoppage and closure of the components and pay points per sub-section (a) above.

- (c) Once the PERSAL Controller has created the new components and pay points under the Receiving School, the District HR Officials should proceed and capture the names of the teachers, administrative and support staff who have been redeployed to the Receiving School against the Receiving School or alternative schools they have been deployed to.
- (d) The DBE must be informed in writing by the PED of the stoppage and closure of the components and pay points of the Re-aligned Schools and on the opening of new components and pay points as part of the staff establishment of the Receiving Schools. Such correspondence must be directed to the Director: Education Human Resource Planning, Provisioning and Monitoring.

#### **AP-Step 6.3: *Reclassification of the Receiving School***

- (a) The need for reclassifying the Receiving Schools should be assessed and, where necessary, reclassified as either a Fee-paying or a Non-fee Paying School, based on the overall profile of the learners including those from the Re-aligned School.
- (b) All the admin processes and funding arrangements commensurate with the reclassified Receiving School must be initiated and concluded by the District Director for approval by the PED.

#### **AP-Step 6.4: *Review of National School Nutrition Programmes***

- (a) The allocation of the NSNP Funds against the Re-aligned Schools and the Receiving Schools should be reviewed after the learners have been moved to the Receiving Schools.
- (b) Where the Receiving School was not a beneficiary of the NSNP prior to the re-alignment process and the Re-aligned Schools were beneficiaries, then an assessment of the Receiving School should be carried out and necessary allocation of the NSNP Funds and associated NSNP resources be made available such that the learners in the Receiving School post the re-alignment process are not disadvantaged.
- (c) Where applicable, the allocation of the NSNP Funds at the Receiving School should be increased proportionately and reduced proportionately at the Re-aligned School, according the new LEF after the re-alignment process.
- (d) The processes stated in sub-sections (a), (b) and (c) above must be co-ordinated and scheduled properly by the NSNP Provincial Co-ordinator together with the D-SRRP-C to manage the transition period such that:
  - (i) No “excess” food supplies are left at the Re-aligned School;
  - (ii) Learners to be moved from the Re-aligned School continue to be provided with regular meals until they have been moved to the Receiving School; and
  - (iii) There is sufficient food and equipment at the Receiving School to cater for additional learners from the Re-aligned Schools after they have been moved to the Receiving School.
- (e) The NSNP Provincial Co-ordinator should assist with the ensuring the adequate number of Food Handlers at the Re-aligned School and at the Receiving School per the new LEF post the re-alignment process per the provisions of Section 10.1.2, Step 6 (AP Step 6.5) (f) above.



- (f) Where applicable, the NSNP Provincial Co-ordinator must ensure that the Contracts with the appointed Service Providers providing food supplies are reviewed based on the new LEF at the Re-aligned School and at the Receiving School.
- (g) The P-SRRP-C must advise the DBE NSNP Directorate and the NSNP Provincial Co-ordinator immediately of a need to review NSNP arrangements at the Receiving School.

#### **AP-Step 6.5: Relocation of Personnel and Goods to the Receiving School**

- (a) Once all the arrangements have been finalised in the Receiving School for accommodating the learners and the staff from the Re-aligned School and all the HR and Admin processes been completed, where necessary, the schools must be assisted with the physical relocation processes to the Receiving School.
- (b) The relocation processes would include the following:
  - (i) Making arrangements for any fittings together with large and delicate equipment, and any other specified items to be moved from the Re-aligned School and re-used at the Receiving School.
  - (ii) Items to be relocated must be identified, specified and included as part of the contract of the contractor to be appointed to carry out the infrastructure works at the Receiving School, preparing for receiving additional learners and staff from the Re-aligned Schools.
  - (iii) Where no construction work would be required at the Receiving School, because of appropriate and sufficient capacity to accommodate additional learners and educators from the Re-aligned School, then another Service Provider other than a contractor should be procured to assist with the relocation activities.
  - (iv) The deliverables associated with the relocation services should include:
    - (1) Taking off all such items from the fixtures;
    - (2) Packaging and packing all the items to be relocated;
    - (3) Transporting the items to the Receiving School;
    - (4) Refurbishing and/or fixing any items that require such (could use sub-contractors to do that work);
    - (5) Installation of the items at the Receiving School; and
    - (6) Commissioning them.
- (c) The timing of the activities stated under sub-section (b) above must be carefully planned and agreed upon ahead of time with the School Principals of the affected schools to minimise any potential disturbance to the teaching and learning activities. The D-SRRP-C should assist with the co-ordination process.
- (d) The D-SRRP-C should facilitate the process of ensuring that the District Office has made the necessary payment arrangements and pay for relocation of any other items that are not part of sub-section (b) above, moving them from the Re-aligned School to the Receiving School. The deliverables associated with this assignment shall include packaging, packing, transporting, off-loading and placing/installing such items in the areas identified by the Receiving School. Such items would include, but not limited to:
  - (i) All the learning and teaching materials;

- (ii) All the material used as part of the support services;
  - (iii) All the sport and recreational material and equipment; and
  - (iv) Furniture, equipment and tools.
- (e) Where a learner opts to attend a different school other than the identified Receiving School, then such learner shall make his/her own relocation arrangements to such alternative school and pay for them, unless agreed otherwise by the School Governing Bodies and the District Office.
  - (f) The District Office should make all the necessary arrangements and pay for the relocation of the teachers, admin personnel and support staff that are earmarked to be moved either to the Receiving School or to other alternative schools in accordance with the applicable agreements in the ELRC and the Public Sector Collective Bargaining Council (PSCBC).

#### **Step 7: Employee Wellness and Support Processes (WSP)**

##### **WSP-Step 7.1: *Development of Employee Wellness and Assistance Plans***

The Employee Assistance Programme of the Province must support educators, admin and support staff moving from Re-aligned Schools to Receiving Schools. This process should be carried out similarly to Step 7 in Section 10.1.2 above.

##### **WSP-Step 7.2: *Implementation and Monitoring of Wellness and Employee Support Programme***

The Employee Support Plan should be implemented similarly to Step 7 under Section 10.1.2 above.

## 11. PARAMETERS FOR CLOSING DOWN MICRO SCHOOLS

- (1) Only schools that are classified as micro schools according to the *MUNAS-PSI* should be considered for closure and merger as part of the School Rationalisation Process. This refers to Primary Schools with Learner Enrolment Figures (LEF) of less than 135 and Secondary Schools with LEF of less than 200.
- (2) Where schools with LEF of more than 20% of either 135 or 200 (i.e. 162 or 240), as the case might be, are proposed for closure, a formal request for approval of such should be prepared by the P-SRRP-C, assisted by the D-SRRP-C, and submitted to the MEC, stating clearly the reasons for such proposal.
- (3) Notwithstanding the provisions of sub-section (2) above, the observed level of performance (high failure rate) should not be used as a reason for closing down a school. Issues pertaining to underperformance in public schools should be dealt with in accordance with Section 58B of SASA.
- (4) The site to which other schools could be relocated for merger, i.e. the Host School Site, could either be:
  - (a) Another existing micro school;
  - (b) An existing bigger school; or
  - (c) Green-fields site, where such should be considered in cases where the existing nearby schools are either:
    - (i) Built of inappropriate materials;
    - (ii) Do not have sufficient land for a merged school;
    - (iii) Not located on ideal sites – either unavailability of basic services, difficult terrain, environmental constraints such as flood-lines, or incompatible adjacent land-uses such as taxi ranks, public hostels, brothels, etc.;
    - (iv) Constrained by topographical and/or man-made physical barriers between the proposed Host Site and the catchment areas; or
    - (v) Located at excessive distances from the catchment areas.
- (5) When deciding on the Host School or new site for the Host School all the conditions stated below must be taken into consideration. Where possible, the Host School must:
  - (a) Be part of an existing catchment area that draws the highest number of learners or that is centrally located between the catchment areas it serves;
  - (b) Not be placed in the middle of nowhere, being isolated from any of the catchment areas it serves;
  - (c) Located within reasonable distance from the catchment area such that if transport is to be provided:
    - (i) The road conditions are reasonably good and the road is passable under all weather conditions;
    - (ii) The road does not have a low river crossing that floods when it rains;
    - (iii) It would not take more than 45 minutes maximum, one way, to transport the Primary School Learners either to school or from school, and not more than 1hr 15min for Secondary School Learners, given the distance to be travelled and the condition of the roads. This is intended to prevent:
      - (aa) Fatigue among the learners;

- (bb) Loss of study / productive time;
  - (cc) Loss of play and interaction time; and
  - (dd) Inability to participate effectively in extramural and/or extracurricular activities.
- (iv) Notwithstanding sub-section (c)(iii) above, where possible the Host School should be located within a 30km radius from the catchment area to:
- (aa) Reduce the transportation costs;
  - (bb) Reduce potential risk of exposure to road accidents; and
  - (cc) Manage better learner productivity.
- (d) When built anew, and where possible, not be located more than 3km (as measured along the route to be traversed) from the parent catchment area for Primary Schools and 5km for Secondary Schools if no scholar transport would be provided. This is intended to:
- (i) Reduce overall costs, risks and other nuisance factors associated with Learner Transportation;
  - (ii) Reduce the walking distances among the learners and the problems raised under sub-section (c)(iii) above;
  - (iii) Increase the productive time of learners; and
  - (iv) Reduce problems associated with safety and security of learners.
- (e) Where Learner Boarding Facilities:
- (i) Would not be provided, avoid merging a large number of micro schools into one Host School Site. This is to ensure smooth transition, avoid system shock as a result of massive increase in LEF literally overnight, and a need to manage effectively the transition and amalgamation of different school cultures to ensure that teaching and learning time is not lost in managing behavioural and psycho-social problems;
  - (ii) Not be provided or where the Host School was not already classified as a medium or large school before the merger, should ideally not combine micro schools to end up with a Host School that is classified as a mega school. This is intended to manage the attendant serious psycho-social problems, especially bullying and intimidation, that is associated with large and mega schools; or
  - (iii) Would be provided, the number of non-boarding learners should at least not be less than the minimum LEF for a primary or a secondary school, as the case might be. (This is intended to ensure that the school is located in a viable community for long-term sustainability.)
- (f) Where possible, be located on a site that has access to municipal and other essential services (water, sewer, refuse removal, telephone lines, better roads, mobile network connectivity, radio and TV signals) and within reach of the National Power Grid;
- (g) Where possible, be on a site that is closest to the main transport routes, when compared with other potential sites;
- (h) Be located in the proximity of other social services such as clinics, hospitals, Police Stations, public libraries, where these services are available;

- (i) Be in the proximity of feeder primary schools or secondary schools, for association and to enhance the potential of sharing resources such as sport facilities;
  - (j) Be located next to the catchment areas with a potential of and/or earmarked for economic development;
  - (k) Be located in the vicinity of catchment areas that are earmarked for development of or expansion of human settlements;
  - (l) Not be located on a small site that might prohibit the current and/or potential future expansions;
  - (m) Not be located on areas with difficult terrain and/or difficult soil conditions; and
  - (n) Should not have natural or man-made physical barriers that limit accessibility and/or pose safety and security risks to learners to and/or from school.
- (6) All the parameters stated in sub-section (5) above must be weighed against one another to yield the most optimum location of the Host School.
- (7) Topographical or man-made physical barriers that separate the proposed Host School Site from the catchment area, thus posing safety and security risks, must be considered at all times when deciding on an ideal site for a Host School. The physical barriers that need to be avoided, where possible, include:
- (a) Rivers with no safe river crossings for pedestrians and/or for vehicles;
  - (b) Ravines, gorges and deep dongas;
  - (c) Forests, bushes and thickets;
  - (d) Mountains;
  - (e) Cliffs;
  - (f) Deserted routes with potential hideouts;
  - (g) Railway lines with level pedestrian crossings;
  - (h) Roads where the speed limit exceeds 60km/hr and with no overhead pedestrian bridge or safe subway (box culvert) pedestrian crossing;
  - (i) Informal settlement through which to traverse to get to and from school;
  - (j) Farms:
    - (i) Where crops such as sugar cane, tea, sunflower are grown;
    - (ii) Where thoroughfare or trespassing is prohibited; or
    - (iii) With dangerous animals.

## 12. CONSIDERATIONS FOR LETTING MICRO SCHOOLS TO CONTINUE OPERATING

- (1) Given the current geographic location of some of the human settlements, the rurality of some provinces, the extent of farming activities taking place in some provinces, the topographical and man-made physical constraints, the cultural orientation of some communities, the current and planned socio-economic activities, some human settlements (catchment areas) remain sparse and isolated from other nearby human settlements. Therefore taking this reality into consideration, it is inconceivable that all the micro schools would be closed down. While the primary goal is to ensure the provision of quality education to all the learners, accessibility to the education facilities is a prerequisite and therefore imperative. Following this reality, Regulation 5(6) of the *MUNAS-PSI* allows for instances where micro schools could be allowed to continue to operate, therefore needing to be provided for fully with their physical infrastructure requirements and supported accordingly.
- (2) Given the consideration in sub-section (1) above, the assessment to be made is whether it would be economically viable, sustainable, just and socially acceptable to close down some of the micro schools. The areas to be considered include:
  - (a) The distance of the next nearest school from the catchment area, and the condition of the roads;
  - (b) Existence of topographical and/or man-made physical barriers;
  - (c) The general safety and security concerns; and
  - (d) Potential future reversal of the current learner migration patterns requiring a need for re-establishment of some of the schools that would have been closed down, especially in the townships because of population growth rates and inflow of people from other areas.
- (3) Where a decision has been made not to close down a micro school, such schools must:
  - (a) Be supported fully curriculum-wise;
  - (b) Consider multi-grade teaching, taking into consideration the provisions of Section 8(5) above;
  - (c) Consider a combined school where a micro primary and a micro secondary school are in the same vicinity and justifiable to combine them, in accordance with the provisions of Regulation 5(7) of *MUNAS-PSI*; and
  - (d) Be provided with adequate, proper, and conducive physical infrastructure in line with the provisions of the *MUNAS-PSI*, taking into consideration the following:
    - (i) Where the LEF has been decreasing over the past five (5) years, with projected further decrease, then provide Movable Alternative Building Technologies (MABT), with the proviso per the matrix below. This excludes “mobile classrooms” that do not meet Indoor Environmental Quality Standards (especially thermal and acoustic standards) and/or that do not have Agrément Certification; and
    - (ii) Where the LEF has been gradually increasing or remained relatively stable over the past five (5) years, with the proviso per the matrix below, then provide brick and mortar (B&M) structures.

**MICRO PRIMARY SCHOOL**

$30 \leq \text{LEF} < 135$	<b>B&amp;M</b>	<b>MABT</b>
$\text{LEF} < 30$	<b>MABT</b>	<b>MABT</b>
	<i>LEF Increasing or Stable</i>	<i>LEF Decreasing</i>

**MICRO SECONDARY SCHOOL**

$100 \leq \text{LEF} < 200$	<b>B&amp;M</b>	<b>MABT</b>
$\text{LEF} < 100$	<b>MABT</b>	<b>MABT</b>
	<i>LEF Increasing or Stable</i>	<i>LEF Decreasing</i>

### 13. PROVISIONS FOR LEARNER BOARDING FACILITIES

Some Provincial Education Departments (PEDs) have opted to provide Learner Boarding Facilities instead of transporting learners to and from school. Where this option has been considered, the following provisions should be taken into consideration:

- (1) Sections 83 and 84 of the *National Norms and Standards for School Funding* (NNSSF) and *Guidelines for the Provision of Boarding Facilities in Public Ordinary Schools* provide guidelines on the development of Learner Boarding Facilities.
- (2) Provisions of Section 11(5)(e) above.
- (3) The Cost-Benefit Analysis must be carried out on the provision of Learner Boarding Facilities over the provision of Scholar Transport, looking at both the capital and operating costs over the life-span of the Learner Boarding Facility, which should be taken as 30 years. This analysis must include both financial and non-financial costs.
- (4) Scenario Planning premised on the learner migration patterns should be conducted when planning Learner Boarding Facilities as this would affect the medium- to long-term viability of the facilities to be provided and would also have an impact on the return on investment, where the Occupancy Rate of 80% should be considered as a minimum.
- (5) As part of the assessment required in sub-section (4) above, due consideration must be given to the general trends in the area with respect to the utilisation of Learner Boarding Facilities that were once operational but no longer operational. This should be coupled with market research to assess the extent to which the notion of the proposed Learner Boarding Facilities (revived or new) would be favoured by the potential users – parents, learners and educators, and supported by the local communities.
- (6) In deciding on the Learner Boarding Facilities, the PED must consider the total costs (Capital Expenditure – CAPEX, and the Operating Expenditure - OPEX) to be incurred and the total revenue to be realised from running the Learner Boarding Facility over its projected life-span. Consideration must be made on the sources of revenue especially given the Non-fee Paying Schools that might need to be accommodated as they predominantly rely on the national fiscus for funding. This should include the maintenance costs and any refurbishments that might be required in future, taking into consideration different Economic Service Lives of various components that make up a complete, conducive and functional facility.
- (7) Both the CAPEX and OPEX for developing and for running the Learner Boarding Facilities should be funded from the Provincial Equitable Share (PES) to free up the special Conditional Grants such as the Education Infrastructure Grant (EIG) to focus on the provision of replacement schools, new schools, maintenance, refurbishments/renovations and on upgrades and additions, thereby dealing with the current infrastructure and maintenance backlogs and the current overcrowding in some schools, as a means of meeting the requirements of the *MUNAS-PSI*.
- (8) Learners who are less than 12 years old should not be placed in the Learner Boarding Facilities to prevent:
  - (a) Potential emotional and long-term psychological problems associated with early separation from their parents, guardians and/or relatives;
  - (b) Separation Stress/Depression associated with sub-section (a) above;
  - (c) Potential Developmental Trauma Disorder (DTD) “*which refers to traumatic effects of (real or perceived) parental neglect on the developing child’s brain and body*” (Mark Peter Kahn, 2016);
  - (d) Potential serious psycho-social and behavioural problems later in life; and



- (e) The associated societal costs/burden on the social services, in the event of sub-sections (a) to (d) above materialising.
- (9) The general increase on the incidents arising from ill-discipline, vandalism and other school safety and security concerns such as bullying and violent attacks have to be considered carefully in deciding whether it would be beneficial to provide Learner Boarding Facilities and if all the necessarily measures would be put in place to abate such problems.
- (10) Where the Learner Boarding Facilities are provided, adequate safety and security measures must be provided, in line with the provisions of the *School Infrastructure Safety and Security Guidelines (2017)* and other School Safety Standards/Policies of the Department of Basic Education.
- (11) The learners in the Learner Boarding Facilities must be provided with adequate sport and recreational facilities.
- (12) Where Learner Boarding Facilities are provided, provisions of Section 146 of the NNSSF should be adhered to.

- **146. Records:** Schools with hostels must keep a separate account for all recurrent costs associated with hostels, and a record of the number of learners staying at each hostel. Such accounts and records will be subject to unannounced audits by officials of the PED.

- (13) Proper staff arrangements must be made to ensure that:
  - (a) Sufficient personnel is appointed based on the number of learners to be accommodated in the Learner Boarding Facility;
  - (b) Suitable and properly qualified staff is appointed and this includes:
    - (i) Boarding master/mistress;
    - (ii) Kitchen staff;
    - (iii) Cleaning Staff; and
    - (iv) Security personnel.
  - (c) Reference checks are made before appointing any member of staff at a Learner Boarding Facility.

## 14. PUBLIC MICRO SCHOOLS LOCATED IN PRIVATE PROPERTIES

- (1) The education sector has a number of schools that are located on private properties. Where this occurs, Section 14 Agreements, per Section 14 of SASA, are expected to have been signed between the respective Provincial Education Departments (PEDs) and the private property/land owners, setting out the roles, responsibilities and the obligations of each party with respect to the facility concerned.
- (2) Where a public school facility is on private property and the PED had agreed to the establishment and operation of the said school on such property, the PED remains fully responsible for ensuring access to quality education by the learners and that the facilities used for teaching and learning purposes meet the provisions of *MUNAS-PSI*, and that they are safe and conducive for teaching and learning. This is the Constitutional obligation of the Department and also as espoused in SASA.
- (3) The question that normally arises is whether the PED should invest on a private property by upgrading a school and/or Learner Boarding Facility that is located on a private property. Consideration is made on micro schools that are built of inappropriate materials and/or those that do not have access to any form of basic services and cannot be relocated to alternative sites per Section 11 above. Depending upon the obligations and conditions set out in the Section 14 Agreement, referred to in sub-section (1) above, the PED is expected to maintain and/or upgrade such property to acceptable standards of an educational facility or to cause the property/land owner to maintain and/or upgrade it.

## 15. INTERIM PROVISIONS FOR MICRO SCHOOLS UNDER SRRP

### 15.1 General Considerations

- (1) A number of instances occur where micro schools that are a subject of the School Rationalisation and Re-alignment Process (SRRP) might:
  - (a) Not have adequate number of teachers;
  - (b) Not have sufficient learning and teaching material;
  - (c) Not have adequate number of classrooms and/or other functional spaces;
  - (d) Built entirely of inappropriate materials; or
  - (e) Not have any access to or have grossly inadequate basic services.
- (2) The normal reaction is that of not attending to the immediate needs of schools referred to in sub-section (1) above on the basis of the fact that they would be closed down “soon”. This is a legitimate consideration that is advanced on the grounds of a need to:
  - (a) Prevent fruitless and wasteful expenditure;
  - (b) Anxieties of making long-term engagements in an environment that is not long-term, especially in as far as Human Resource and infrastructure investments are concerned; and
  - (c) Maximise return on investment, given the capital costs to be incurred, especially on infrastructure provisioning.
- (3) The entire Rationalisation Process might take anything up to three (3) years or more to be concluded before the learners and educators could be moved to the Host School. This period includes all the preliminary consultations and stakeholder engagements, gazetting etc. and also the time it would take to complete the construction activities at the Host Site. This period would even be longer if Learner Boarding Facilities were to be provided.
- (4) The concern is on the immediate needs of the schools referred to in sub-section (1) above, the extent to which such needs could be attended to given a need to avoid fruitless and wasteful expenditure. Some interim provisions need to be considered for these schools so that they could remain functional and operational until they have been merged and closed down.

### 15.2 Interim Provisions for Schools Earmarked for Closure and Merger

#### 15.2.1 Interim Staff Provisioning

- (1) The Provincial Head of Department of Education (“the HoD”) must continue to provide posts to the affected schools according to the determined post establishment annually or as determined.
- (2) In pursuit of sub-section (1) above, the HoD should avoid making new permanent appointments to affected schools, instead the following options should be considered:
  - (a) Use provisions allowing for appointment of Temporary Teachers in Post Level 1 (PL1) vacant posts and Acting Appointments in PL2 - PL4 vacant posts; and

- (b) Use the provisions that allow for Temporary Transfer of Educators declared as in excess in other schools for a pre-determined period per Section 8(5) of the Educators Employment Act.

### **15.2.2 Provision for Learning and Teaching Support**

- (1) Learning and teaching support should continue to be provided in the schools that are subject of the SRRP.
- (2) The nature of the support to be provided includes:
  - (a) Curriculum support by Circuit and/or District Offices;
  - (b) Provision of the allocated school budget per NNSSP;
  - (c) Provision of Learning and Teaching Support Material;
  - (d) Provision of School Nutrition;
  - (e) Provision of Learner Transport, where required; and
  - (f) General Upkeep and Minor Maintenance provisions, to the extent possible, to at least effectively manage hygiene issues and address occupational health and safety risks.
- (3) The PEDs should therefore make the necessary annual budget allocations to ensure the realisation of services in sub-section (2) above.

### **15.2.3 Provision of Interim Basic Infrastructure**

- (1) Where micro schools would be merged with other schools and closed down, adequate infrastructure should be provided at the Host School to accommodate the learners, teachers, admin and support staff, as the case might be. Therefore replacing inappropriate structures or providing additional functional spaces of brick and mortar in such schools should be avoided.
- (2) Where the existing structures at the school earmarked for closure pose occupational health and safety risks or are on the brink of collapsing, temporary mobile structures should be considered, and such unsafe structures be demolished immediately after providing the temporary structures.

### **15.2.4 Provision of Interim Basic Services**

- (1) Where considerations are made to provide basic services to schools under Sub-section 15.2.1(a) above, cheaper and appropriate temporary measures should be considered as an interim solution.
- (2) The following temporary measures should be considered while long-term permanent solutions are being pursued:
  - (a) For temporary sanitation facilities:
    - (i) Relatively shallow VIP Latrines with IBR metal sheet cladding or similar;
    - (ii) Removable alternative technology; or
    - (iii) Mobile toilets could be considered but depending upon the cost of providing them over the intended duration.

- (b) For temporary water supply:
  - (i) Carting of water and filling up water tanks; or
  - (ii) Temporary connections to existing water supply such as the municipal mains or local bulk water storage should be considered.
- (c) For temporary electricity supply:
  - (i) Diesel powered generators, wind turbines (in areas with regular high wind speeds) and solar panels are potential temporary power supply measures that could be considered over connection to the National Power Grid.
  - (ii) The total costs, security and the vulnerability to theft, especially solar panels, should be assessed. Where the costs are considered to be too high or other risk factors such as potential theft, considerations could be made to await the completion of more “permanent” arrangements at the Host School.
- (3) The respective IPID should make necessary budget provisions to enable the identified temporary measures to be implemented over the duration on which the school would be utilised as interim.

## 16. MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL FACILITIES POST CLOSURE OF MICRO SCHOOLS

- (1) After a micro school has been closed down, the facility must not be left unoccupied for a period of more than six (6) months because this poses serious safety and security risks as the vacated school buildings:
  - (a) Could be used as a hide-out for unwanted activities; and
  - (b) Unsafe structures may collapse, leading to injuries and/or fatalities.
- (2) Where the facility was built of inappropriate materials or a brick and mortar structure that is deemed to be unsafe structurally, such structures must be demolished and the site cleared, with rubble disposed of in an environmentally acceptable manner. The cleared site should then be transferred by a Department of Public Works, as a custodian, to either a needy Government Department, Local Municipality, or nearby community, having the provisions of Section 33(3) and 58A(2) of SASA, and the applicable due processes of transferring public immovable assets been followed.
- (3) Where the facility was built of appropriate materials and is deemed to be structurally safe, it must be transferred either to another Government Department, Local Municipality or to the nearby community for its use, having followed the due processes per sub-section (2) above. The recipient shall thereafter become fully accountable and responsible for the transferred facility, including all the necessary general upkeep and maintenance interventions.
- (4) Upon the facility been transferred to the third parties, the Department of Public Works should then deregister it on the Government Immovable Asset Register as an asset of the Education Department and register it as an asset of the third party where the third party is a government entity, having taken note of provisions of Section 10.1.2 Step 6 (AP-Step 6.9) (b) above.
- (5) In the event of sub-section (3) above, the Education Department would not incur or be liable for any further capital costs associated with the necessary renovations, reconfiguration, or upgrading of the facilities prior to or after they have been transferred to the third parties.
- (6) Where the micro school that is being or has been closed down was on private property, the following provisions should, where possible and applicable, be made:
  - (a) Any movable assets that were provided by the Department to remain the property of the Department and should be relocated to the Host School, or any other public school, or donated to third parties as might be determined by the MEC per provisions of Section 10.1.2 Step 5 (IPP-Step 5.4)(b) above;
  - (b) The movable assets contemplated in sub-section (a) above include:
    - (i) Mobile Classrooms;
    - (ii) Mobile toilets;
    - (iii) Furniture, Fittings and Equipment;
    - (iv) Learning and Teaching Support Material;
    - (v) Any equipment, utensils, consumables etc. used for teaching and learning, support, sport activities, NSNP, general upkeep of the school, etc.;
  - (c) Where applicable and as might be contained in the Section 14 Agreement:
    - (i) Compensation for improvements to the immovable property where these were made and paid for by

- the private property owner and not settled by the Department in full yet; and
- (ii) Settlement of any outstanding monies due to the private property owner.
- (d) Assistance be provided by the Department, facilitated by the D-SRRP-C, to make good the site to reasonable standards. This would include:
- (i) Collection and disposal of any rubble and solid waste associated with schooling activities; and
  - (ii) Cleaning-up activities associated with decommissioning and closure of the school.



## 17. PROGRESS REPORTING ON SRRP

- (1) The sector needs to adopt a uniform approach towards reporting on the progress made on the School Rationalisation and Re-alignment Process (SRRP) to ensure uniformity, ease of interpretation of the data and the ability to roll-up the numbers for consolidation and sector reporting.
- (2) Where temporary measures are provided while permanent solutions are pursued, as covered under Section 15 above, progress reporting should include updates on the provision of both the temporary and the long-term measures.
- (3) The first part of the Progress Report on the SRRP should confirm the baseline information per Province, providing basic information on all the micro schools and mis-aligned schools. The Reporting Templates for providing this baseline information is included as **Annexures 1 and 2**, respectively.
- (4) The second part of the Progress Report for SRRP should reflect progress made towards the successful completion of all the SRRP leading to and including the decanting of the learners and educators to replacement facilities, and also on the decommissioning processes including the transfer of the unused school property to the next beneficiary. The SRRP Progress Reporting Templates are included as **Annexures 1 and 2**.
- (5) The N-SRRP-C should determine the regularity of reporting as part of the monitoring and oversight functions by the DBE.

## 18. REVIEW OF THE GUIDELINES

- (a) Conditions on the ground change over time as the issues are interacted with, more information made available, new and unforeseen problems encountered and resolved leading to new experiences on how to deal better with SRRP issues.
- (b) This calls for continuous improvement of the School Rationalisation and Re-alignment processes and approaches for effectiveness and efficiency. Therefore this document, the *SRRP Guidelines*, would be revised periodically to be responsive and to remain relevant.

## ANNEXURES

### *Annexure 1 – Template for Reporting Baseline Information and Progress made on the School Rationalisation Process*

## NOTES ON THE SCHOOL RATIONALISATION AND RE-ALIGNMENT PROCESS (SRRP)

### (1) Steps to be followed for the School Rationalisation and Re-alignment Process

- (a) The process and steps to be followed in carrying out the SRRP is stipulated in the Guidelines for Rationalisation and Re-alignment of Public Schools : A Holistic Approach (2017), (the “SRRP Guidelines”).
- (b) The SRRP Guidelines have been approved by CEM and signed by the Minister for implementation by all in the basic education sector when undertaking the School Rationalisation and the School Re-alignment Processes.
- (c) The SRRP Guidelines provide step by step processes to followed when undertaking the SRRP Processes.
- (d) The SRRP Guidelines also provide SRRP Reporting and Monitoring Templates to aid uniform, holistic and aligned reporting by all the PEDs and effective monitoring of progress in this regard by the DBE.
- (e) The reporting items follow the processes and sequence of events provided in the SRRP Guidelines and therefore it is necessary that the Compiler of the Progress Report familiarises him/herself of the contents and the requirements of the Guidelines.
- (f) All the PEDs are therefore required to use the SRRP Reporting Templates that have been provided.
- (g) Assistance of the DBE must be sought whenever there is uncertainty on the reporting items or the contents of the SRRP Guidelines.
- (h) Any suggested amendments to the SRRP Reporting Templates should be forwarded to the DBE for its consideration and to effect the necessary changes thereby leading to revised Reporting Templates that would then be issued to all.

### (2) Parameters for Closing Down Micro Schools

- (a) Section 11 of the SRRP Guidelines provide guidelines on the conditions upon which Micro Schools may be down.
- (b) All the conditions set out under this Section of the SRRP Guidelines must be satisfied before deciding on closing down a Micro under the School Rationalisation Process.

### (3) Potential Physical Barriers

Section 11(7) of the SRRP Guidelines provide potential physical barriers that may prohibit the suitability of an identified school as a Host School. These are summarised below:

- (a) Isolated with excessive distances from the catchment area;
- (b) Rivers with no safe river crossings for pedestrians and for vehicles;
- (c) Ravines, gorges and deep dongas;
- (d) Forests, bushes and thickets;
- (e) Mountains;
- (f) Cliffs;
- (g) Deserted routes with potential hideouts;

- (h) Railway lines with level pedestrian crossing;
  - (i) Roads where the speed limit exceeds 60km/hr and with no overhead pedestrian bridge or safe subway (box culvert) pedestrian crossing;
  - (j) Informal settlement through which to traverse;
  - (k) Farms:
    - (i) Where crops such as sugar cane, tea, sunflower are grown;
    - (ii) Where thoroughfare or trespassing is prohibited; and
    - (iii) With dangerous animals.
- (4) **Additional Infrastructure Provisions to be considered in a school to be used as a Host or Receiving School**
- (a) Additional Classrooms
  - (b) Additional Staffrooms
  - (c) Adequate Basic Services (Ablution Facilities, Water, Electricity)
  - (d) Other Instructional Spaces
  - (e) Additional Support Spaces
  - (f) Provisions for People with Disabilities (Learners, Teachers and Visitors);
  - (g) Furniture, Fittings and Equipment (FFE)
  - (h) Facility Systems (ICT, Fire Fighting, Safety and Security per the Guidelines for Safety and Security)
  - (i) Learner Boarding Facilities
  - (j) Outdoor Amenities

**Name of Province :**

PROVINCIAL SCHOOL RATIONALISATION AND RE-ALIGNMENT TEAM					
Function	Name and Surname	Designation	Email	Telephone	Appointed in writing (Y/N)
Provincial SRRP Coordinator					
Governance Representative					
Legal Representative					
Finance Representative					
Infrastructure Representative					
Curriculum Representative					
Teacher Development Representative					

## DISTRICT SCHOOL RATIONALISATION AND RE-ALIGNMENT COORDINATORS

[illegible]

Compiled By:

Date:

## SCHOOL RATIONALISATION PROCESS

## BASELINE INFORMATION ON ALL MICRO SCHOOLS IN THE PROVINCE

Name of the Province : :

**Baseline Information as at (date) :**

68



**Progress Report as at (date):**

[illegible]

## SCHOOL RATIONALISATION PROCESS

**Name of the Province:**  
**Progress Report as at (date):**

[illegible]

### SCHOOL RATIONALISATION PROCESS

**Name of the Province :**  
**Progress as at (date) :**

71

## STEP 4: Human Resources Management Processes (HR)

Progress as at (date) :

[illegible]

## STEP 5: Infrastructure Provisioning Processes (IPP)

[illegible]

**Name of the Province :**  
**Progress as at (date) :**

[illegible]

## SCHOOL RATIONALISATION PROCESS

## STEP 7: Employee Wellness and Support Processes (WSP)

**Name of the Province :**

Progress as at (date) : :

[illegible]



## SCHOOL RATIONALISATION PROCESS

## STEP 8: Legislative Processes-2 (LP2)

**Name of the Province :**

Progress as at (date) : :

[illegible]

***Annexure A2 – Template for Reporting Baseline Information and Progress Made on the School Re-alignment Process***

**SCHOOL RE-ALIGNMENT PROCESS**  
**BASELINE INFORMATION ON ALL MIS-ALIGNED SCHOOLS IN THE PROVINCE**

Name of the Province : :

Baseline Information as at (date) :

[illegible]

## SCHOOL RE-ALIGNMENT PROCESS

**Name of the Province:**

[illegible]

## STEP 3: Legislative Processes 1 (LP1)

Progress as at (date) : :

[illegible]

## STEP 4: Human Resources Management Processes (HR)

**Name of the Province :**

**Progress as at (date) :**

[illegible]

## STEP 5: Infrastructure Provisioning Processes (IPP)

Progress as at (date) : :

[illegible]





## STEP 7: Employee Wellness and Support Processes (WSP)

Progress as at (date) : :

[illegible]

## Note

## Note

## Note

## Note



Published by the Department of Basic Education

222 Struben Street

Private Bag X895, Pretoria, 0001

Telephone: 012 357 3000 Fax: 012 323 0601

ISBN: 000-0-0000-0000-0

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