

10 August 2020

BASIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT URGES COMMUNITIES TO PROTECT SCHOOLS AGAINST DISRUPTIONS

As Grade 7 learners prepare to return to school on Tuesday, 11 August, the Department of Basic Education urges communities to protect schools against individuals and groups that are threatening to close schools and disrupt learning.

The Department has become aware of attempts made by some members of School Governing Bodies (SGBs) around the country to close schools and disrupt learning. In Gauteng, SGB members disrupted 38 schools in Daveyton/Etawatwa, 37 schools in Tsakane, and 8 schools in KwaThema on Thursday. There are reports of the Congress of South African Students (COSAS) also disrupting schools across the province.

The Department would like to remind all members of SGBs that the closing of schools remains a legal function reserved for the provincial Head of Department and when members of an SGB act outside the legal dictates of their role and function, they risk the immediate disbandment of the entire School Governing Body.

The Council of Education Ministers is on record as having warned that any individual or group who disrupts learning at our schools will be reported to the authorities and the Department reserves the right to charge them with violation of the South African Schools Act (Act no. 84 of 1996).

The roles and functions of SGBs are clearly defined in the Schools Act and include the following -

- An SGB must ensure that the school is governed in the best interest of all the stakeholders. All SGB members must always put the best interest of the school before any personal interests.

The South African Schools Act further stipulates that an SGB must:

- Promote the best interest of the school and ensure its development
- Adopt a constitution setting out how the SGB will operate
- Adopt a mission statement for the school
- Adopt a code of conduct for learners at the school which sets out disciplinary procedures
- Help the principal, educators and other staff members to perform their professional functions
- Decide on school policy which should include amongst others admissions, language, and finance
- Administer and control the property of the school, buildings, and grounds

Media Enquiries:

Elijah Mhlanga - Head of Communication: 083 580 8275 | **Hope Mokgathe** - Spokesperson to Minister: 079 817 0427

Terence Khala - Media Liason Officer: 081 758 1546



basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



- Encourage parents, learners, educators and other staff members at the school, to offer voluntary services to the school

The SGB may apply to the Head of Department, in writing requesting to be allocated any of the following functions -

- To maintain and improve the school's property, buildings, and grounds
- To buy textbooks, educational materials, and equipment for the school
- To pay for services rendered to the school.

The Department further appeals to SGBs to refrain from taking matters into their own hands. SGB members are urged to use the available channels to register their dissatisfaction, as per Chapter 3, Section 21 of the Act, which states that (5) *Any person aggrieved by the decision of the Head of Department in terms of this section may appeal to the Member of the Executive Council.* Failure to follow this directive may result in the immediate disbandment of SGB members.

ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION

Media Enquiries:

Elijah Mhlanga - Head of Communication: 083 580 8275 | **Hope Mokgathe** - Spokesperson to Minister: 079 817 0427

Terence Khala - Media Liason Officer: 081 758 1546



basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

