



basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION, MRS ANGIE MOTSHEKGA, MP DELIVERED AT THE MEDIA BRIEFING FOLLOWING PRESIDENT RAMAPHOSA'S ADDRESS TO THE NATION ON SUNDAY, 27 JUNE 2021

28 June 2021

Good morning to the members of the media, leaders of the Basic Education Sector, parents and learners at home.

Today we are in the Free State as part of monitoring the vaccination of teachers and support staff. As you know the programme started last week and in this province good progress has been made. As the MEC Montsheng Tsiu has indicated the province is doing well. Together with MEC Tate Makgoe they have been driving the vaccination programme in the province.

We are here to support. But we have also decided to take this opportunity to address other important matters affecting the sector.

The Council of Education Ministers (CEM) met this morning (28 June 2021) to reflect on the details that His Excellency, President Ramaphosa presented during his Family Meeting last night.

In his address last night, the President announced that “***schools will start closing from Wednesday, 30 June 2021; and schools will be expected to be closed by the end of the week***” on Friday, 02 July 2021. He further indicated that I, as “***the Minister of Basic Education, will provide details on these arrangements***”.

CEM unanimously agreed that –

- Learners in public and independent or private schools should be released for winter vacation on Wednesday, 30 June 2021;
- The School Management Teams (SMTs), teachers, learners in hostel facilities, and learners with special education needs waiting for parents to pick them up, should report at school until Friday, 02 July 2021;
- Public schools will come back from the winter vacation early, on 19 July 2021, instead of 26 July 2021; as it was originally scheduled in the 2021 School Calendar;
- Schools will make the necessary arrangements to continue to provide feeding to those learners who are beneficiaries of the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP);
- The usual Winter Vacation Learner Support Programme for Grades 11 and 12, organised by provinces, districts and schools, should continue under very strict conditions in compliance with the COVID-19 health and safety protocols;
- Given the fact that learners writing the May/June 2021 examinations are very few, these examinations and marking thereof, should also continue under strict adherence of COVID-19 health and safety protocols; and
- The vaccination programme for the Basic Education Sector personnel, will proceed as planned; the workers are advised to adhere to their schedules, and strictly adhere to COVID-19 protocols, as stipulated in the Regulations. Schools designated as vaccination sites, must remain open to continue with the vaccination programme. It is important that we all work together to complete the vaccination as soon as possible.

The aforementioned matters have been discussed with various stakeholders in the Sector, and there has been support and

concurrence on all of them. The Sector stakeholders consulted include CEM itself; HEDCOM; national teacher unions in the ELRC – including SADTU, NAPTOSA, SAOU, NATU and PEU; representatives of national SGB associations; representatives of national associations for learners with special education needs, as well as the NAISA and other Associations for Independent or Private Schools. Further discussions with stakeholders will take place this afternoon.

The Sector will remain vigilant in monitoring the developments of the epidemiology, working closely with the Ministry of Health, to inform the implementation of the Risk Adjusted Differentiated Strategy, when there is a need to do so, including the earlier pronounced full attendance of primary school learners from the first day of the third school term.

The Council also appreciated the report that more than **two hundred thousand** (200. 000) educators and staff in the Basic Education Sector had been vaccinated so far. The Sector has a target of **five hundred and eighty two thousand, five hundred and sixty four** (582 564) personnel who are eligible to receive the single dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine. The Department of Health has assured us that additional doses will be made available in parts of the country, where the allocations have already been depleted as a result of the progress of the programme

On learner support programmes during COVID-19 pandemic

In light of the disruptions to schooling brought on us by COVID and the move to the Risk Adjusted Level 4, the Sector has with immediate effect activated the remote learner support programmes.

The **WOZA Matrics 2021 Catch-Up Programme** and the **Tswelopele Campaigns** are initiatives established by the DBE, in

collaboration with the National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT).

These are national supplementary remote learning campaigns, developed to support 2021 matric learners and learners in the General Education & Training Band (GET) from Grades R to 9; with supplementary support content, that will enable learners to catch-up on learning losses; and enable them to enhance, acquire and develop crucial knowledge, skills, attitudes and values during the academic year.

The campaigns provide digital and non-digital learning resources in partnership with a range of content providers through the DBE-TV on Open-View Channel 122, SABC 1 and DSTV Catch-Up, YouTube channels, as well as digital and mobile chat platforms. These platforms were put in place to minimise the negative impact of COVID-19 on learning, and to provide further learning opportunities in the context of the restrictions that are currently in place. A detailed list of the resources is available on the DBE website.

We implore parents, guardians and caregivers to ensure that during the recess, children continue to learn, using the available resources. Doing so, will protect the gains that have already been achieved.

We also encourage our learners to remain safe. Do not gather in crowds. apply hygiene practices at all times, and avoid activities that may expose learner to infections.

Thank you