



GAUTENG PROVINCE

EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

To: All Media

Att: News Editors

For immediate release

19 November 2019

Gauteng Schools to Increase Classroom Capacity

The Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) is working closely with schools in high pressure zones to increase their classroom capacity to accommodate unplaced learners.

It is also important to note that the department has identified some schools in affected areas which will be assisted with a provision of mobile classrooms. We will also partner with Independent Schools to accommodate excess learners from our Public Schools accordingly, in consultation with respective parents.

In addition, GDE will introduce English and Afrikaans as the Language of Teaching and Learning (LoTL) in the under-subscribed township schools. The said schools will be assisted to acquire the necessary educators that have qualifications and proficiency to teach in the required LoTL.

The department is also initiating the process of merging single medium schools with low learner enrolments, to open English medium schools in high pressure zones.

As of today, 19 November 2019, we have placed **267 611 (94, 63%)** applicants which reflects an increase of **3 859** placements. The remaining **14 617** applicants are still to receive placement offers and must be placed by the 30 November 2019 deadline.

During the Online Admissions Application period which started on 20 May 2019 to 22 July 2019, the department received a total of 310 350

applications. Of these, **27 563** applicants have **not** submitted the required documents, while **282 787** applicants have submitted the documents.

“We are undoubtedly working diligently, ensuring that schools increase their classroom capacity to accommodate additional unplaced learners by **30th November**. Parents are therefore urged to accept offers given or immediately object if not suitable, so that those rejected offers can be given to other applicants. Nevertheless, our main objective is ensuring that no learner is without a school,” said MEC Lesufi.

A parent that does not prefer the offer of placement given should lodge an objection with the District. Objection forms are available at District offices.

Should the parent remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the Objection, they may complete an Appeal Form available at District offices.

Learners’ suicide: MEC Lesufi in shock

Meanwhile, MEC Lesufi is saddened by the death of two learners from Phahama Secondary and Hoërskool Bekker, who committed suicide respectively.

The first incident happened on Thursday, **14 November 2019** where it is alleged that a 17-year-old Grade 12 girl-learner from Phahama Secondary School committed suicide by hanging herself at home. It is alleged that the deceased lost her new cell phone and was too scared to tell her parents, hence she decided to take her own life.

Sadly, the second incident occurred on Sunday, **17 November 2019**, whereby a 19-year-old Grade 12 Hoërskool Bekker boy- learner allegedly shot himself at home, with his father’s firearm. The deceased left a note which will form part of the Police investigation.

The Psycho-Social Unit was dispatched to both schools to offer necessary support and counselling to all affected.

"It is unfortunate and regrettable that learners took their own lives in this manner. We take this time to send our heartfelt condolences to the families, friends and the school communities, during this time of grief. No words are enough to express our sorrow at a loss of our learners. We hope that the families will find comfort in the knowledge that we too share their loss,” said MEC Lesufi.

Furthermore, MEC Lesufi encouraged pupils to "focus on their education and refrain from things that may have a negative impact on their studies"

For more information, contact the Gauteng Department of Education's Spokesperson, Steve Mabona on 072 574 3860.

Issued by the Gauteng Department of Education

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