



GAUTENG PROVINCE

EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

To: All Media

Att: News Editors

For immediate release

8 January 2019

MEDIA STATEMENT ON THE STATE OF READINESS FOR GAUTENG SCHOOLS REOPENING

Welcome ladies and gentlemen and thank you for honouring the invitation to the media briefing.

In this briefing, we will provide an update on the admissions in public schools; GDE's state of readiness for the 2019 academic year and the 2018 NSC Examination Results.

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL 2019

Schools in Gauteng reopen tomorrow, 9 January 2019. We believe that all has been done to ensure a smooth start to the first day of school and that learning and teaching will commence without any disruptions.

To mark the first day of school the Premier, Mr David Makhura, together with MEC for Education, Mr Panyaza Lesufi and MEC for Infrastructure Development, Mr Jacob Mamabolo will hand over the newly constructed **Menzi Primary School in Tsakane, Ekurhuleni.**

This is an important milestone, as the school is among our newly designed and constructed mega school infrastructure, aimed at improving the quality of education in township schools. The school is a green technology infrastructure, which boasts state of the art facilities such as 33 smart classrooms, a Grade R block with 5 classrooms, 2 smart science labs, 2 smart multi-purpose rooms, library, dining hall and many more, at a cost of R105 508 403. Due to the demand for space in Gauteng schools, we are pleased to announce that **Tshepisong, Mayfield and Centurion Primary Schools** will also be opened this month of January to address demands in high pressure areas.

In addition, Members of the Executive Council (MECs) will be deployed to various schools across the province to oversee the smooth running of the first day of school. They will assess conditions in each of the schools to which they are deployed, as well as consult with communities on education related matters.

ADMISSIONS PLACEMENT

We applaud parents who applied on time for Grade 1 and 8 online admissions for 2019. The department received a total of 282 823 Early Applications for the 2019 academic year; and of these, 266 613 (94.3%) are placed, whereas 16 210 (5.7%) applicants have not responded to offers or calls to submit documents.

We appeal to parents to accept placement offers by the district, as these are the only available spaces.

Late Applications

The department opened for late online applications on 28 November 2018, with only 1068 schools available for application. On the same day, a total of 945 of 2013 schools with Grade 1 and 8 entry grades reached capacity and were no longer available for any further late applications. **As at 7 January 2019, a total of 205 schools reached capacity, and 863 schools still have available spaces for immediate placement.**

The department received a total of 24 228 late applications, and of these, 19803 applied by 15 December 2018, while 2402 applied during school holidays. We have successfully placed 8090 (33.4%) who have submitted documents; while 16138 (66.6%) are provisionally placed and will be finalised when documents are submitted. Parents are urged to submit the required documents to finalise placements. **Furthermore, parents are advised to submit the required documents (birth certificate, ID copies, proof of address etc) immediately after placement.**

All Districts are operating as walk-in centres to assist parents with applications from 7 – 31 January 2019. Parents are encouraged to visit the district offices for assistance.

The most common challenges reported at walk-in centres include the following:

- A large number of parents are new applicants
- Follow-ups on appeal outcomes
- Existing applicants trying to re-apply
- Late Applicants requesting transfers to schools that are no longer available in the system due to capacity. Applicants will not be transferred to schools that are no longer available in the App. What you find in the App, is what is available.
- Relocations and placement in inner grades

Overcrowding Interventions

In Tshwane South, Wierdapark Primary School will be relocated to the New Centurion Primary School and will be provided with new furniture and the necessary support in order to temporarily accommodate approximately 400 Grade 8 learners in Centurion that are not placed. A secondary school is being planned for the area.

The most challenging needs are experienced by Johannesburg Central, Tshwane South and Tshwane West. Johannesburg Central had no space to accommodate 304 early applicants in the Southern Suburbs. Die Fakkels High School and Ormonde Primary School (64) are prepared to

accommodate excess learners. However, Die Fakkkel High School would require additional mobile units. Further, Ormonde Primary School has no sewerage system.

In Tshwane West, 1016 Grade 1 and 831 Grade 8 learners who reported to the District are not placed. Hoërskool Hercules was identified to accommodate the 831 Grade 8 learners. Infrastructure renovated 4 additional classrooms. Mobile units will be utilised to accommodate the 1016 Grade 1 learners. The District is exploring alternative means to accommodate learners

Unplanned financial implications of admitting late applicants are substantial. Additional funding will have to be found to finance educator salaries, additional classrooms, learning and teaching support materials and school furniture. Procurement processes are also not instant but can take weeks to complete.

The department is doing everything possible to place all unplaced learners. We appeal for patience, calm and cooperation in the interest of learners.

Online admissions for the 2020 academic year will be

EDUCATION MONTH

The month of January has been declared the Education Focus Month under the theme ***“Deliver quality education in modern and conducive learning environments”***. The focus is on education-related activities with the objective of marking the start of the 2019 academic year. Activities planned for the month of January include the following:

- Visits to the top 2 township schools
- Breakfast with no fee-paying schools that achieved 100% matric pass
- Opening of new schools
- Launch of Schools of Specialization for 2019
- Online Registration placement
- Bursary awards function

- New young writers Programme
- Meeting with School Principals
- A meeting with all Teacher Unions and SGB formations

HUMAN RESOURCES

The 2019 Educator's Post Establishment and the Circular addressing the implementation were issued after the consultation with labour was finalised. We can confirm that 855 Funza Lushaka posts were allocated to districts, of these 283 graduates were issued with provisional placement letters.

LTSM/ FURNITURE

The department can confirm that the delivery of Volume 1 Workbooks is at 100% and 913 out of 1087 schools that ordered furniture have received furniture to-date. Furniture deliveries are prioritised as follows: new schools, additional classrooms and backlogs at existing schools. Combo desk to the value of R 5,7 Million were ordered from Environmental Affairs for delivery to new schools as soon as the GDE security is in place.

SCHOLAR TRANSPORT READINESS

The Department is ready for the Transportation of Learners in the Last Quarter of the Financial Year (January 2019 – March 2019). The number of learners are expected to grow by around 8% (average annual increase in learners benefitting from the Programme). The expected increase will move the number of learners from 124 752 to around 134 732 learners across the Province in academic year 2019.

SCHOOL NUTRITION

Approximately 1.4 million Learners in 1 621 schools across the province will receive a meal as part of our School Nutrition Programme. The number is likely to increase to an estimated 1 574 380 due to in – migration in line with Admissions.

The Department is in the process of procuring eating utensils for all schools.

MATRIC RESULTS 2018

The department once again congratulates the Class of 2018 for their outstanding quality performance by achieving 87.92% pass rate and reclaiming Gauteng as the number one performing province. We appeal to learners who were unsuccessful this time, to never lose hope, as there are available options to obtain the NSC Certificate. We urge learners to sign up for the Matric Second Chance Programme at their nearest district office, which will provide them with all the necessary support and study material.

Re-checking or re-marking of examination scripts

Candidates may apply for re-checking or re-marking of examination answer scripts immediately after receiving their results.

The closing date for applications for a re-check or re-mark is, 18 January 2019.

Application forms for re-checking or re-marking of examination answer scripts are available from schools or examination centres. The fees entail: R25 for re-checking, R105 for re-marking and R205 for viewing of an examination script. Viewing of a script can only be done after re-checking and re-marking have been done.

Candidates from no-fee schools and learners, whose parents have applied and have been granted a concession on the payment of school fees, are exempted from payment of re-checking and re-marking fees.

We want to take this time to welcome all Grade R and approximately 140 000 Grade 1 learners to the schooling system, and wish them everything of the best on this important journey of their lives. We are excited that Grade R is migrating from the Department of Social Development to Education and that all ECD Centres will now have a formal programme and curriculum.

The department cautions parents against fake schools and urges them to contact our call centre on 0800 000 789 to check whether a school is registered.

The province engaged in thorough preparations to ensure that Schools are ready to commence with teaching and learning activities on Day1 of 2019 Academic Year.

Despite high volumes of late applications, officials are making every effort to ensure that applicants are assisted and that placement is facilitated without delay. Admissions Decentralised venues open before 8:00 and parents are treated with courtesy while queries are being addressed. The Department anticipates the placement of all 2018 applicants before end January 2019.

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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