



MEDIA STATEMENT

**To: All Media
Att: News Editors
For immediate release**

20 October 2023

GDE SADDENED BY LEARNER DEATH FROM FOOD POISONING

The Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) is saddened to confirm that today, on Friday, 20 October 2023, a Grade 3 boy learner from Onkgopotse Tiro Primary School in Tshepisoong, Roodepoort passed away at a local clinic due to alleged food poisoning.

It is alleged that two Grade 3 boy learners from the school complained of stomach cramps in class and were rushed to Tshepisoong Clinic. Unfortunately, after few minutes of receiving medical attention, one learner was certified dead. Accordingly, the surviving learner was transferred to Leratong Hospital for further medical treatment, and he is in stable condition.

According to information at our disposal, it is alleged that the two learners bought and consumed a pack of biscuits from a local spaza shop in the area.

We wish to convey our sincerest condolences to the family of learner, and the greater school community of Onkgopotse Tiro Primary School for their loss. Subsequently, we will dispatch our Psycho-Social Support officials to the school for necessary support. We wish the learner who survived this incident at a speedy recovery.

We continue to urge School Governing Bodies (SGBs), parents and communities at large to be always vigilant towards the food or snacks sold in and around schools. Where it is suspected that the food or snack may have expired, such information should be reported to the local health or police authorities for necessary action.

Meanwhile, we are greatly satisfied with the work done by police in a similar matter regarding food poisoning where 90 learners from Pulamadibogo Primary School in Soshanguve who were hospitalised on 20 September 2023 after consuming space cookies. This follows the Soshanguve Magistrates Court denying three suspects in the matter bail. The case will resume on Tuesday, 12 December 2023.

For more information, contact the Gauteng Department of Education's Spokesperson, Steve Mabona on 072 574 3860 or Spokesperson for Gauteng Education MEC Matome Chiloane, Xolani Mkhwemte on 084 513 9285

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