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## DEPARTMENTS OF BASIC EDUCATION AND HEALTH CONCLUDE AGREEMENT TO ENSURE COVID -19 POSITIVE CANDIDATES ARE ALLOWED TO WRITE 2020 MATRIC EXAMINATIONS

The Department of Basic Education and the Department of Health have just concluded an agreement this evening that will ensure that learners who test positive for COVID-19 are allowed to write the final matric examinations.

The DBE previously issued a set of guidelines which indicated that learners who were COVID-19 positive would not be allowed to enter the exam center.

The Department subsequently received representations from parents and learners alike who requested the government to review the protocols. The two Departments jointly considered the requests and deliberated on the practical implications.

It was agreed that candidates who test positive, and deemed fit to write the examination, will be allowed to write albeit at a different venue and under secure conditions that are in compliance with the examination regulations. The Departments will work jointly to ensure that candidates who have been confirmed to be positive are given an opportunity to sit for the exams while ensuring that safety is observed.

“We welcome the intervention by the Department of Health given that a learner that tests positive becomes the responsibility of the Department of Health and no longer an education issue. The initial protocol of the Department of Basic Education was widely consulted and endorsed by the Department of Health, but this change in the protocol is very helpful because it will give all learners an opportunity to write their examinations,” said Minister Motshekga.

Minister Motshekga has however cautioned that the concessions did not mean that people should now be complacent in terms of the safety measures aimed at preventing the spread of COVID-19.

It also needs to be noted that learners who are screened at the entrance of the examination venue and display a temperature higher than 38°C will be allowed to write the examination in an isolation venue at the school. These learners will be immediately taken to the isolation venue and after the examination they will not be allowed to socialise with other learners, but will be taken to a health centre for further medical attention.

The Department is committed to ensuring that our Grade learners are provided with the most conducive environment for the writing of this important examination.

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