

24 January 2021

SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS AND SUPPORT STAFF EXPECTED BACK IN SCHOOL ON MONDAY, 25 JANUARY

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) revised 2021 school calendar issued last year indicated that schools would reopen on 25 January 2021 (for teachers) and 27 January 2021 (for learners).

The DBE and Provincial Departments of Education are also very concerned about the safety and security of their employees due to the increase in COVID-19 and related cases.

On the 22 January 2021, the Minister of Basic Education released Government Notice 18 of 2021 to amend the directions regarding the dates for the reopening of schools, to provide for the 2021 academic year, and for measures to address, prevent and combat the spread of COVID-19 in the country.

The Department further released Departmental Circular 01 of 2021 *“the return of Educators and Support staff to schools for the 2021 academic year amidst covid-19 pandemic”* putting in place measures for the safe return of Educators and all Education personnel to schools in a staggered approach as outlined in the Government Gazette No. 44096 as published and as per the following schedule:

- **Monday, 25 January 2021** – The Principal, School Management Teams (SMTs) including Education Assistants and General Assistants (Basic Education Employment Initiative) and non-teaching staff must return to school;
- **Monday, 01 February 2021** – All educators must return to school;
- **Monday, 15 February 2021** – All learners must return to school.

The circular also made provision for educators who may have one or more comorbidities.

Media Enquiries:

Elijah Mhlanga - Head of Communication: 083 580 8275 | **Hope Mokgathe** - Spokesperson to Minister: 079 817 0427

Terence Khala - Media Liason Officer: 081 758 1546

URGENT NEWS

As a result, all educators and support staff are expected to report for duty as per the above schedule without fail.

Educators and/or Support Staff who fail to report for duty as stipulated without a valid and approved reason subject themselves to disciplinary action being taken against them. All other cases of absenteeism are to be dealt with in terms of the relevant leave provisions as provided for in the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM).

The Department would also like to appeal to all staff members to please ensure that we all continue to adhere to all the health and safety measures that have been communicated to you and your staff. We need to ensure that our schools are safe working environments and those individuals that are not adhering to these measures need to change their attitude for the benefit of all.

The Department would like to advise the teaching and non-teaching staff not to engage in unprotected action which will lead to undesirable consequences.

Thank you for your commitment to ensuring safety of all.

ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION

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Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

