



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE

EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Media Statement

To: All Media

Embargoed: For immediate release

Wednesday, 11 May 2023

THE DEPARTMENT SETS A RECORD STRAIGHT ON THE CLOSURE OF SCHOOLS REPORTS

The Department of Education in KwaZulu-Natal would like to place on record that it is not closing schools in the Province as it has been suggested in some media reports.

The schools in question are those schools that have low learner enrolment such that quality of teaching and learning cannot be realised.

The Department's constitutional responsibility is to provide quality basic education as enshrined in Section 29 of the Constitution.

As per the minimum uniform of norms and standards in public schools, Section 5 states that the school with enrolment of less than 135 learners in primary schools and less than 200 learners in secondary schools, does not meet the minimum standards.

In KwaZulu-Natal, however, the Province has resolved to focus on schools which have less than 50 in primary schools and less than 100 in secondary schools as not meeting the minimum requirements of norms and standards.

This process excludes Special Schools, Schools of Specialisation and Technical Schools.

GROWING KWAZULU-NATAL TOGETHER

Issued by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education

Media enquiries:

Mr Muzi Mahlambi:
Head of Communication
+27 82 519 1420

Mr Sihle Mlotshwa:
Media Relations Manager
+27 72 207 2018

Mr Siqiniseko Shezi:
Media Liaison Officer
+27 82 421 6916



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE

EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

“This points to the fact that the Department is not “trigger happy” to “close” schools as it has relaxed the minimum requirements of schools which can be deemed as viable, “said the HoD, Mr Nkosinathi Ngcobo.

Mergers and closures of schools is a standard practice that occurs when schools are identified as non-viable and too costly to operate. There are 3 000 schools nationwide that have been identified as non-viable.

The merger and closure of schools is part of the Transformation of the Schooling System programme (TSS) which has six pillars of change, which are: Eliminating inequality, creating schools as centres of excellence, streamlining schools into primary and secondary schools, renaming of schools, consolidating small, non-viable schools and Section 14 schools as well as optimal utilisation of human and material resources.

The enrolment drop in some schools is caused by the fact that some schools are built in privately owned land (Section 14) and some land owners are reluctant to sign the Permission to Occupy (PTO) and some chase learners away. Faction fights and violence where schools are situated, poor school academic performance and parents deciding to move their children elsewhere, urbanisation in search of better economic opportunities, communities fighting educators and chasing them away and slow pace of infrastructure development in areas where schools are located, are amongst the factors causing the drop of enrolment in the identified schools.

Section 20 (1) of the South African Schools Act (SASA) states that the MEC can merge two or more schools into a single mega school if the enrolment of the school does not meet minimum requirements.

GROWING KWAZULU-NATAL TOGETHER

Issued by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education

Media enquiries:

Mr Muzi Mahlambi:
Head of Communication
+27 82 519 1420

Mr Sihle Mlotshwa:
Media Relations Manager
+27 72 207 2018

Mr Siqiniseko Shezi:
Media Liaison Officer
+27 82 421 6916



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE

EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Section 33 of SASA also gives the MEC the authority to close small schools provided that the interests of learners to education and representation from interested and affected parties are considered, thorough consultation of stakeholders has been done, and that safety of learners and educators is prioritised.

A notice of intent to close the said schools was issued and officials are currently meeting and engaging with the interested and affected parties from the schools affected by School Rationalisation and Re-alignment Process (SRRP).

Learners from the identified schools will be moved to the nearby schools and learner transport will be provided where necessary. Educators from these schools will be redeployed to the schools where their services will be gainfully utilized.

The MEC for Education in KwaZulu-Natal, Ms Mbali Frazer, further made a commitment that, “No learner will be without a teacher during school period, and no learner will be forced to stay at home because of the closure of non-viable schools.”

Once the school has been closed, the infrastructure is handed over to the Department of Public Works. Some schools the Department will use them as Schools of Skills, Focus Schools and Special Schools. Other schools will be used by other Departments for community projects. Furniture and other assets will be distributed to other schools.

....///ends

GROWING KWAZULU-NATAL TOGETHER

Issued by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education

Media enquiries:

Mr Muzi Mahlambi:
Head of Communication
+27 82 519 1420

Mr Sihle Mlotshwa:
Media Relations Manager
+27 72 207 2018

Mr Siqiniseko Shezi:
Media Liaison Officer
+27 82 421 6916