

9 November 2020

BASIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT HAS ISSUED REVISED PROTOCOLS AND A CIRCULAR FOR MANAGING COVID-19 CASES DURING MATRIC EXAMINATIONS

The Department of Basic Education has issued a circular to accompany the revised protocols for schools to implement when managing possible and confirmed COVID-19 cases in schools during the matric examinations.

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) in conjunction with the Department of Health (DoH), agreed on 4 November 2020 to allow learners that have tested positive for COVID-19, to write the Combined 2020 November examination under specific conditions. The protocols and the circular (both attached) were developed together with stakeholders following a series of consultative meetings over the weekend with teachers' unions, school governing body organizations and the South African Principals Association. The documents have already been distributed to schools.

The Director-General of the Department, Mathanzima Mveli used the sessions to share the rationale for the decision to support learners who were either showing symptoms, those who tested positive or even those with temperature readings of 38 degrees and above. All the stakeholders supported the Department and made inputs on the handling of COVID-19 cases during matric examinations.

The teacher union representatives and SGB governors as well as school principals at the meeting welcomed the measures taken to ensure that all candidates of the Class of 2020 matric are given the opportunity and support to sit for the examination albeit under unusual circumstances.

The important part is that parents/guardians of candidates that have tested positive for COVID-19 are obliged to inform the school principal immediately of the positive status of the candidate. This is to ensure that arrangements can be made for the candidate to write the examination at an isolation venue that complies with the health, safety and also the regulations relating to a secure examination.

Candidates are advised to be extra cautious during this period of the examination to minimise their risk of contracting the virus. They should refrain from attending any social gatherings and strictly observe the protocols relating to social distancing, wearing of the mask, and hand sanitizing. The Department also appeals to parents and communities to continue supporting the Class of 2020 throughout the examination period.

The examinations continue today with IsiZulu, IsiXhosa, IsiNdebele in the morning session starting at 9am and Agricultural Sciences and Nautical Sciences in the afternoon at 2PM.

ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION

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