

# WCED POLICY FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF ADMISSION AND REGISTRATION OF LEARNERS AT ORDINARY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- Background**      The Western Cape Education Department (WCED)'s school admission policy has been revised to align admission and registration of learners.
- Previous policies**      The following circulars are replaced by this policy:
- Circular 0129/2000 Administration of admission of learners
  - Circular 0187/2003 Admission of Grade 10 learners to Cape Academy
  - Circular 0040/2004 WCED Policy and Procedures for the Admission of Learners to Ordinary Public Schools
- Related policies**      The new WCED admission policy, including administration procedures, is presented in this document and must be read in conjunction with the following WCED policies:
- Circular 0121/2003: WCED policy on managing learner pregnancy in public schools
  - Circular 0240/2003: Admission of over-age learners to public schools
  - Circular 0046/2004: Admission policy for pre Grade R and Grade R learners to ordinary public schools
- Scope**              This policy is applicable to all ordinary public schools in the Western Cape Province. Where conflict arises with another WCED circular or policy, the prescripts in this policy shall prevail.
- Policy purpose**      The purpose of the policy is to
- meet the objectives of the Bill of Rights as contained in the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996)*, as amended;
  - support schools in developing admission policies within the prescripts of national and provincial legislation, including public and private law;
  - afford all children access to public schools within the prescripts of the law;
  - facilitate the admission of learners to ordinary public schools in the Western Cape in a timely and efficient manner;
  - ensure the lawful administration of learner admission and registration in schools;
  - enable effective teaching and learning to commence on the first day of the school year and the first day of successive school terms; and
  - align the admission processes with the WCED CEMIS.

## Definitions

<i>Parent</i>	(a) the parent or guardian of a learner, (b) the person legally entitled to the custody of a learner, or (c) the person who undertakes to fulfil all the obligations of a person referred to in (a) and (b) towards a learner's education at a school.
<i>Head of Department</i>	The Superintendent-General [SG], who is the Head of the Western Cape Education Department
<i>School programme</i>	The total array of curricular, extra-curricular activities, sport, cultural, recreational, social and any other school activities offered by a school.
<i>School activity</i>	Any official educational, cultural, recreational or social activity of a school within or outside the school premises.
<i>School fees</i>	School fees as determined in Section 39 of the SASA and which includes any form of contribution of a monetary nature made or paid by a person or body in relation to the attendance or participation by a learner in any programme of a public school.

## Abbreviations

<i>WCED</i>	Western Cape Education Department
<i>HoD</i>	Head of Department
<i>MEC</i>	Member of the Executive Council
<i>NEPA</i>	National Education Policy Act
<i>SASA</i>	South African Schools Act
<i>SGB</i>	school governing body
<i>CEMIS</i>	Central Education Management Information System
<i>FET</i>	Further Education and Training

## 2. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

<b>Legislation</b>	The admission of learners to ordinary public schools in the Western Cape is subject to the following legislation:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The <i>Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, 1996</i> (Act 108 of 1996), as amended, hereinafter referred to as "the Constitution"</li> </ul>
Right to education	Section 29(1) of the Constitution guarantees every person in South Africa, citizens and non-citizens alike, the right to a basic education, including adult basic education and further education, which the State, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The <i>National Admission Policy for Ordinary Public Schools</i>, [National Policy] (Government Gazette 19377 of 1998) as promulgated in terms of the National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act 27 of 1996), as amended [NEPA]</li> <li>▪ The <i>South African Schools Act, 1996</i> (Act 84 of 1996), as amended (SASA)</li> </ul>
Compulsory education	In terms of the SASA Section 3(1), school education is compulsory for all learners from the <u>age of seven years until</u> the last school day of the year in which a learner reaches <u>the age of fifteen years or the ninth grade</u> , whichever occurs first. The state and the WCED therefore have a Constitutional obligation to provide basic education for all learners of compulsory school-going age.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The <i>Regulations relating to the exemption of parents from the payment of</i></li> </ul>

Exemption from payment of school fees	<i>school fees in public schools</i> (Government Gazette 29311 of 18 October 2006) as promulgated in terms of the South African Schools Act
Language Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Norms &amp; Standards for Language Policy in Public Schools</i>, (GG 18546, December 1997)</li> <li>▪ <i>The Western Cape Provincial School Education Act</i>, 1997 (Act 12 of 1997)</li> <li>▪ <i>The Promotion of Access to Information Act</i>, 2000 (Act 2 of 2000)</li> <li>▪ <i>The Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, 2000 (Act 3 of 2000)</i></li> </ul>

### 3. LEGAL PRESCRIPTS FOR THE PROVISION OF SCHOOL EDUCATION

<b>Provincial Obligation</b>	Each province in the Republic of South Africa has responsibility for the provision of school education for learners in that province.
<b>School places</b>	The SASA Section 3(3), requires that the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) responsible for education in a province ensures that there are <b>sufficient school places</b> so that <u>every child of compulsory school-going age</u> who lives in that province, can attend school.
<b>Hostels</b>	The provision of public schools may include the provision of hostels for the residential accommodation of learners [SASA, Section 12(2)].
<b>Specialised education</b>	The MEC must, where reasonably practicable, provide education for learners with special educational needs at ordinary public schools and provide relevant educational support services for such learners [SASA, Section 12(4)].
<b>Independent schools</b>	Apart from public school provision of education, learners may be educated at an independent school registered with the WCED.

### 4. LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PROCESSES REQUIRED TO CO-ORDINATE AND ADMIT LEARNERS TO ORDINARY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

<b>Co-ordination of admissions</b>	<p>Par. 8 of the National Admission Policy for Ordinary Public Schools, as promulgated in terms of the NEPA, states that “the <b>HoD</b> must co-ordinate the <b>provision</b> of schools and the <b>administration of admissions</b> of learners to ordinary public schools with <b>governing bodies</b> to ensure that all eligible learners are suitably accommodated in terms of the SASA”.</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> It is important that <b>all learners of compulsory school-going age (seven to fifteen years)</b> are appropriately accommodated in schools.</p>
<b>School admission policy</b>	In terms of the SASA, Section 5(5) and the National Admission Policy par 7 the <b>governing body</b> of a public school <b>determines</b> the <b>admission policy</b> of the school.
<b>Admission of learners</b>	The responsibility <b>to admit learners</b> to public schools in terms of Section 5(7) of the SASA is vested in the <b>Head of Department</b> . The HoD may delegate the responsibility to admit learners to a departmental official [SASA, Section (62)(2)].

<b>Administration of admissions</b>	School principals, as members of SGBs, participate in the process to determine the admission policy of the school and school principals administer the admission and registration of learners to schools in terms of the registration process determined by the HoD and the school's admission policy.
<b>Registration of learners</b>	The <b>HoD</b> determines the <b>process of registration</b> for learner admission to public schools, in terms of the National Admission Policy par. 5, <i>Administration of admissions</i> . The WCED has developed the CEMIS registration system for the registration of learners. This system is aimed at enabling the admission of learners in a timely and efficient way, as well as the tracking of all learners who enter the school system.
<b>Appeals</b>	The <b>Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Education</b> considers appeals from a parent or learner who has been refused admission to a public school.

## 5. LEGAL PRINCIPLES PRESCRIBED FOR SCHOOL ADMISSION POLICIES

<b>Introduction</b>	The National Admission Policy promulgated in terms of the NEPA provides the framework for school governing bodies and provincial departments of education to develop the admission policy of a public school. Schools, when developing a school admission policy, must ensure that the following principles are entrenched in their policy:
<b>Legal principles</b>	The admission policy of each public school in the Western Cape must be consistent with the Constitution, the National Policy for Admission of Learners, the provisions in the SA Schools Act and the Western Cape Provincial Schools Education Act.
<b>Access to schools</b>	The SASA at Section 5(3) determines that no learner may be refused admission to a public school on the grounds that his or her parent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) is unable to pay or has not paid the required school fees determined by the governing body under Section 39;</li> <li>(b) does not subscribe to the mission statement of the school; or</li> <li>(c) has refused to enter into a contract in terms of which the parent waives any claim for damages arising from the education of the learner.</li> </ul>
<b>Unfair discrimination</b>	The admission policy of a public school and the administration of admissions by WCED officials, including principals, may not unfairly discriminate against an applicant who applies for admission to a school. (National Admission Policy, par. 9)

<b>Testing of learners</b>	In terms of SASA Section 5(2), the governing body of a public school may not administer any test relating to the admission of a learner to a public school, or direct or authorise the principal of the school or any other person to administer such a test.
<b>Placement committee</b>	Districts must establish a placement committee to determine the grade competency of learners who apply for admission to a school without a report card or the required documents. Such placement committee may consist of the senior Special Needs Education adviser, senior curriculum adviser, relevant subject or grade curriculum adviser, Head: Institutional Management & Governance Co-ordination and Advice and any other official deemed necessary.
<b>Feeder zones</b>	The WCED has <b>not</b> determined any feeder zones for public schools in the Western Cape. Admission of learners to all public schools should be within the prescripts of the law.
<b>Agricultural, Dinaledi &amp; focus schools</b>	<p>Only learners with specific aptitudes will be allowed to attend an agricultural, Dinaledi or focus school. Thus, not every learner will be entitled to education at an agricultural, Dinaledi or focus school, even if such a school is the nearest school; nor will every learner be entitled to equal access to a focus school without meeting the subject ability requirements to benefit from such access. There could thus be fair discrimination in terms of admissions to focus schools based on aptitude.</p> <p>In terms of the National Admission Policy par.11, where placement in a specific course or programme, e.g. a technical field of study, dance, visual art, music, drama, sport, mathematics is required, and where it would be in the educational interest of a learner, he or she may be requested by the HoD to undergo a competence test to assist a placement decision.</p> <p>This provision is applicable for admission to agricultural, Dinaledi and focus schools where learners would be required to sit for provincial tests in specialist fields to assess suitability of placement in a focus school. The assessment for placement could also include interviews, auditions, the presentation of portfolios of work and practical testing.</p>
<b>School language policy</b>	In terms of Section 6 of the SASA, the governing body of a public school may determine the language policy of the school, subject to the Constitution, the SASA and any applicable provincial law.
<b>Compulsory school-going age</b>	In terms of SASA Section 3(1), school attendance is compulsory for all learners from the first school day of the year the learner reaches <u>the age of seven years</u> until the last school day of the year in which the learner reaches <u>the age of fifteen or the ninth grade</u> , whichever comes first.

Children are not compelled to attend school until the year in which they turn **7 years** old.

<b>Admission age of Learners</b>	<p>SASA Section 5(4)(a) determines the admission age of a learner to a public school as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Grade R is age four years turning five years by 30 June in the year of admission, and</li> <li>(ii) Grade 1 is age five years turning six years by 30 June in the year of admission.</li> </ul>
<b>Under-age learners</b>	<p>Learners who are younger than the admission age stipulated in SASA Section 5(4)(a), may be admitted to a public school only in terms of SASA Section 5(4)(b), which stipulates that subject to <b>the availability of suitable school places</b> and other educational resources, the Head of Department may admit a learner who</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) is under the age, contemplated in Section 5(4)(a), if <u>good cause is shown</u>; and who</li> <li>(ii) complies with the criteria that the Minister may, by regulation, prescribe for the admission to a public school of a learner at an age lower than the admission age.</li> </ul> <p>Section 5(5)(d) states “<i>For the purpose of Section 5(4)(b)(i), ‘good cause is shown’ means that</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) <i>it can be shown that exceptional circumstances exist which necessitate the admission of an underage learner, because admission would be in his or her best interest; and</i></li> <li>(ii) <i>the refusal to admit that learner would be severely detrimental to his or her development”.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE</b> the prescripts in Circular 46/2004.</p>
<b>Over-age learners</b>	<p>In terms of par 30 of the National Admission Policy, learners who are in the school system, but who have become over-age because of repeating grades, may not be refused continued education at a school, but, when transferring from one school to another, may be admitted only with the approval of the circuit team manager. The prescripts and procedures are described in Circular 240/2003.</p>
<b>Parental responsibility</b>	<p>In terms of SASA Section 3(6), every parent must ensure that a child for whom the parent is responsible, attends a school from <u>the first school day</u> of the year in which such a learner turns seven, until <u>the last school day</u> of the year in which the learner reaches the age of 15 years or the ninth grade, whichever occurs first.</p> <p>Schools are thus required to bring the importance of regular school attendance to the attention of parents, learners and the community.</p>
<b>Special educational needs learners</b>	<p>SASA Section 12(4) provides that, where it is reasonably practicable, learners with special educational needs should be admitted to ordinary public schools with relevant educational support.</p>

**Married learners** A minor [under the age of 18 years] school learner attains majority status through the act of official marriage.

Married learners, irrespective of age, are no longer considered minors under the law. By virtue of marriage they have taken on the rights of an adult who has a spouse and who has to meet all matrimonial obligations.

Where a male or female learner has married and attained the status of a major, the best interests of the learner remain paramount.

Thus, the change of marital status does not prevent a learner from continuing to attend a public school.

**Expelled learners** In terms of SASA Section 9(5), where a learner, between the ages of seven and fifteen years, and therefore subject to compulsory school attendance, is expelled from a public school, the Head of Department or his or her delegate, must make arrangements for the learner to be placed at another public school.

**Access to total school programme** SASA Section 41(7) stipulates that a learner is admitted to the full school programme and may not, because of the non-payment of school fees by his or her parent, be suspended from classes, denied access to cultural, educational, sporting or social activities of the school, denied a school report, or otherwise be victimised.

**Exemption from payment of school fees** The school governing body, including the principal as an ex officio member of the SGB, must inform parents of the regulations for the exemption from the payment of school fees and of their right to apply for full, conditional or partial exemption in accordance with Section 40 of the SASA and the National Regulations relating to the Exemption of Parents from the Payment of School Fees in Public Schools 2006.  
Government Gazette 29392, November 2006

## 6. UNLAWFUL PRACTICES THAT MAY NOT BE REFLECTED IN SCHOOL ADMISSION POLICIES OR PRACTISED IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**Registration fees, deposits, school fees, bursary assessment fees** SASA Section 39(5) determines that schools may not charge fees such as a registration fee, a deposit, re-admission or pre-admission testing fees, or **any** other fees at the time of application. School fees, and any other fees, may only be charged **after** the learner has been informed in writing of his or her acceptance for admission to the school.

**Academic Performance** Schools may not use the academic performance of learners to determine admission to a school.

**Interviews** Schools should not use interviews with parents or learners prior to the admission of the learner as a form of screening, except for learners with learning barriers who wish to enter an ordinary public school and learners wishing to enter schools offering specialist subjects, e.g. agricultural, Dinaledi and focus schools.

Schools **may not re-register** learners (e.g. at the beginning of a year) who are

<b>Re-registration</b>	already enrolled at the school.
<b>Access to full Curriculum</b>	SASA Section 39(6) stipulates that “a public school may not charge a parent of a learner at that school different school fees based on curriculum or extra-mural curriculum within the same grade.” This means that all the learners in the same grade doing the same subjects shall be provided with equal access to the curriculum and the extra-mural curriculum of the school.
<b>Unpaid school fees</b>	<p>SASA Section 5(3)(a) stipulates that no application for admission may be turned down because a parent or learner cannot pay the annual school fees.</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> No child may be denied the right, because of unpaid school fees, to continue his or her education at the school where he or she is enrolled.</p> <p>SASA Section 41(7) states that “a learner may not be deprived of his or her right to participate in all aspects of the programme of a public school despite the non-payment of school fees by his or her parent, and may not be victimised in any manner, including, but not limited to, the following conduct:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) suspension from classes</li> <li>b) verbal or non-verbal abuse</li> <li>c) denial of access to – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) cultural, sporting or social activities of the school; or</li> <li>ii) the nutrition programme of the school for those learners who qualify in terms of the applicable policy; or</li> </ul> </li> <li>d) denial of a school report or transfer certificate”.</li> </ul>

## 7. THE ENROLMENT OF A LEARNER IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL CONSISTS OF TWO PHASES:

### PHASE 1 APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION

The **first phase** involves the following:

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| <b>Application to a school</b> | (a) An <b>application form for admission</b> to the school is completed.   |
| <b>Notification</b>            | (b) The school to which the learner has applied, <b>notifies the parent or learner</b> that the application for admission has been successful or unsuccessful, and, if successful, the parent or learner must either accept or reject the place in the school. |

### PHASE 2 REGISTRATION FOR ENROLMENT

<b>Provincial CEMIS registration</b>	The <b>second phase</b> commences after acceptance of a learner, with the compulsory <b>registration</b> of the learner on the Central Education Management Information System (CEMIS) as part of the school enrolment.
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## 8. DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED FOR ADMISSION TO AND ENROLMENT AT A PUBLIC SCHOOL

### Admission documents

<b>Application form for admission</b>	Each public school must, on request, supply prospective applicants or their parents with an application form for admission. The WCED CEMIS Learner Registration Form must be used. In addition to the compulsory CEMIS information, the school may request other information required by the school for its own administrative and record purposes.
<b>Compulsory documents for admission</b>	In terms of the National Admission Policy, par. 14 - 17 and this WCED policy, the following documents relating to the learner <u>must accompany the application form</u> in order for the application to be considered:
ID <u>or</u> birth certificate	An <b>official abridged birth certificate or identity document</b> (ID); or, in the absence of such documents, official proof that application has been made to the Department of Home Affairs for a birth certificate or identity document
Proof of Immunisation	Written <b>proof of immunisation</b> against the following contagious diseases: polio, measles, tuberculosis, diphtheria, tetanus and hepatitis B
School report	The most <b>recent original school report</b> issued by the school last attended
School transfer letter	To align the admission process with the WCED CEMIS, an <u>original school transfer letter</u> is required from the school where the learner is enrolled (in all cases where a learner wishes to transfer to another WCED school).

Learners transferring to a WCED public school from an independent school also need to have all the documents mentioned above.

Learners transferring to a WCED public school from home education also need to provide all the above-mentioned documents, except the transfer letter or transfer certificate, when applying for admission.

**Non South African citizens also need the above compulsory documents for admission, as well as one of the following documents:**

Residence permits In terms of the National Admission Policy, par. 20-21, this WCED admission policy applies equally to learners who are not citizens of South Africa and whose parents are in possession of a temporary or permanent **permit for residence** issued by the Department of Home Affairs. The school must acquire and keep a certified copy of the official permit of residence.

**OR**

Study permits A learner, or a learner's parent[s], who entered the country on a **study permit**, shall present the study permit when making application for admission. The school must obtain a certified copy of the study permit.

Persons classified as illegal immigrants must, when they apply for admission to a school for their children or for themselves, show evidence that they have applied to the Department of Home Affairs to legalise their stay in the country in terms of the Immigration Act, 13/2002 or the Refugees Act, 130/1998.

## Registration Documents

**Compulsory CEMIS registration** All learners in the WCED school system must be registered on the WCED's CEMIS system.

**CEMIS forms**

Learner  
Registration Form

The Learner Registration Form is used to register learners who enter the WCED school system for the first time, e.g. in Grade 1 or when registering at a public school from another province or country.

CEMIS Transfer  
Certificate

The CEMIS Transfer Certificate is required when the learner leaves the school to go to another WCED school. This certificate is used to remove the learner from one WCED school and to register the learner at another WCED school.

CEMIS  
Deregistration  
Certificate

The CEMIS Deregistration Certificate is used to deregister learners who leave the WCED school system permanently. This certificate is also required when learners who are of the appropriate school-going age and who previously left the WCED school system, wish to return and enrol at a WCED public school again.

**Admission register**

The WCED CEMIS replaces the manual admission register as required by national policy. Schools must however, ensure that a register or file is kept of all learners' admission details, parental addresses, medical information, etc., as all information is not on the CEMIS system. Schools must also regularly update the additional information of learners.

**Learner profile**

The learner profile must be requested from the previous school that the learner attended. It will contain the latest learner information, assessment record and a record of the learner's grade progressions.

**NOTE** the prescripts regarding the learner profile in the "...*National Protocol for Assessment [Grades R –12]*" contained in Government Gazette 29467 of December 2006, par 32 – 39.

## 9. ANNUAL ADMISSION TIME FRAMES

<b>From March of the year prior to admission</b>	The WCED Head Office runs an annual enrolment advocacy campaign. Schools are requested to run their own advocacy campaigns early in the school year.
<b>First school day in April</b>	Schools must be ready by this date to receive applications for the admission of learners for the following school year.
<b>First Friday in June</b>	Closing date for first round of applications for admission to public schools
<b>Last school week in June</b>	Schools inform all parents in writing that their applications for learner admissions have been either successful or unsuccessful  Where successful, the parent accepts or rejects the school place <b>in writing</b> by the <b>first Thursday of the first school week in July</b> .
<b>The Friday of the first school week in July</b>	Principals submit to the district directors, the completed WCED Addendum A and Addendum B forms containing the following information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The number of vacancies per grade and per medium of instruction</li> <li>▪ The number and particulars of learners who were not admitted to the school and the reasons why those learners were not admitted to the school</li> </ul>
<b>Last Monday in July</b>	Applications for admissions re-open for the second and final period
<b>The Friday of the last school week in September</b>	Closing date for final round of applications for admission to public schools
<b>The Friday of the first school week in October</b>	Schools inform all parents in writing that their applications for learner admissions have been either successful or unsuccessful. Where successful, the parent accepts or rejects the school place <b>in writing within 10 school days</b> .
<b>Last Friday in October</b>	Principals again submit the completed WCED Addendum A and Addendum B forms to district directors informing them of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the number of vacancies per grade and per medium of instruction.</li> <li>• the number and particulars of learners who were not admitted to the school and the reasons why those learners were not admitted to the school.</li> </ul> Principals must consider progression of learners when determining vacancies per grade for the next year.
<b>1 November to beginning of the first term</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Schools that still have space continue to admit learners</li> <li>- Districts direct parents to schools that still have space available</li> </ul>

## 10. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES FOR ADMISSION OF LEARNERS

<b>WCED advocacy for early enrolment</b>	The WCED and its schools run an advocacy campaign to remind and encourage the public to enrol their children at schools for the following year. The advocacy campaign also serves to inform parents and learners of the requirements for admission and the compulsory documentation that must accompany the application.
<b>School admission policy</b>	<p>The school admission policy must be available at the school in the event of a parent or learner wishing to read it at the school.</p> <p>NOTE: Schools should not use the process of interviewing parents and learners as a screening mechanism for admission.</p>
<b>Application form</b>	CEMIS Learner Registration Forms must be copied and used by all public schools for applications for admission of learners. Any additional information about the learner and/or learner's parents [e.g. addresses, medical information] can be acquired on additional forms compiled by the school. The WCED 006 Form is no longer compulsory.
<b>Information to parents</b>	<p>When a parent or learner applies for admission to a school, the school shall make the following information available to all applicants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school's admission policy</li> <li>• The school's learner code of conduct</li> <li>• The school fees payable – including all hidden or additional fees</li> <li>• The exemption from payment of school fees.</li> </ul>
<b>School fee information</b>	<p>Parent(s) or learners must be fully informed about the school fee policy of the school at the time of application.</p> <p>Parents who cannot meet the fee requirements must be informed of the payment options and of the procedures for fee exemptions as per the <b><i>Regulations for the exemption of parents from payment of school fees</i></b>, promulgated in terms of the SASA Section 39(4), (as amended) in Government Gazettes 29311 and 29392 of 2006, and the new exemption table as contained in WCED Circular 0001/2007. These regulations came into effect on 1 January 2007.</p> <p>Parents must also be informed of the period of time within which such applications must be submitted and the right to appeal to the Head of Department against the decision of the SGB on exemption from payment of school fees. Schools <b>must assist</b> parents with these processes.</p> <p>The proposed compulsory school fee payment must include all additional fees for books, stationery or any other fees required for school activities during the year, as well as the financial formula stipulated in the regulations contained in the Government Gazette 29311 of 2006 for the exemption of parents who are unable to pay the fees. Such exemptions could be either automatic, total, partial or conditional. Where a school has been declared a</p>

'No-fee school' in terms of Section 39(7) of the SASA, no compulsory school fees may be levied.

### **Preference of admission**

Where insufficient vacancies exist at a public school, learners of the compulsory school-going age shall have preference of admission over deregistered learners who are not of compulsory school-going age and over-age [Grade plus 6 years plus 3 or more years] and under-age learners. Deregistered learners who are above the compulsory school-going age should be referred to an AET centre or an FET college.

## **11. APPLICATION PROCESS FOR ADMISSION**

### **Application**

An application for the admission of a learner to a public school is made to the principal of the school where admission is sought. The parent or learner makes application for admission to the school by presenting the required compulsory documents, including the most recent **original** school report, and a fully completed application form.

The school shall make the copied CEMIS Learner Registration Form available to any parent or learner seeking admission, and shall assist the person to complete the application, if this assistance is needed.

Neither school fees **nor any other fees** are payable on application for admission.

### Admission receipt

All applicants who apply to a school and complete an application for admission must be provided with receipts, numbered in sequence, for admission by the school. These could be copies of the CEMIS forms or the school's own receipts issued to applying parents or learners.

When a learner applies to a school for admission, the principal, on the closing date for admission, will either admit or not admit the learner to the school in accordance with the school's admission policy, subjects offered and the class space available.

### **Managing compulsory documentation**

All the applicable **compulsory original** documentation stipulated in this WCED policy **must accompany** the application for admission.

### Identity document (ID)

Where the learner is not in possession of an official abridged birth certificate or ID, the principal shall direct the parent or learner to the Department of Home Affairs in order to apply for the document.

The parent or learner must be informed that the application for admission will be considered only upon the provision of written proof from the Department of Home Affairs that application has been made for an abridged birth certificate or ID. The principal must explain to the learner or parents that the application for admission will be retained for three months, on condition that the parent or learner obtain a birth certificate or ID, or proof of application for a birth certificate or an ID, from the Department of Home Affairs.

Learners who have never been registered on the WCED CEMIS system [e.g. from another province] and who wish to be admitted to a WCED public school during the year, and who do not have a birth certificate or ID document, may be admitted conditionally for 3 months until a copy of the learner's birth certificate, or proof that application has been made for an ID document, is obtained from the regional office of the Department of Home Affairs.

It is recommended that schools assist parents to obtain the necessary documentation from Home Affairs to speed up the process of admission and to ensure learners are provided the right to education.

Immunisation certificate

Written proof of immunisation against the following contagious diseases, issued by Health Services or a doctor, must also be presented to the principal:

polio, measles, tuberculosis, diphtheria, tetanus and hepatitis B.

Where such proof is not available, the school principal shall direct the parent and child to the nearest health clinic.

After immunisation, the parent shall present the proof of immunisation to the principal, who shall then continue with the admission process.

Parents who do not want their children to be immunised, shall apply to the Head of Education (HoD), who shall make a decision in this regard.

Pending a decision from the HoD, the learner concerned may not, in the health interests of the other learners, be admitted to the school.

Latest school report

The learner must present his or her **latest original school report**. This original report will ensure that the learner is placed in the correct grade. Principals must do everything possible to ensure that the report presented is valid.

**NOTE** the prescripts regarding report cards in the “...*National Protocol for Assessment [Grades R –12]*” contained in Government Gazette 29467 of December 2006, par 30.

Original School Transfer Letter

To align the admission procedure with the WCED CEMIS, a learner who wishes to transfer from one WCED school [public and independent] to another WCED public school, must present the **original school transfer letter** when applying for admission to a WCED school. Learners, who wish to apply for admission to another WCED school, shall request an **original** school transfer letter from the school he or she currently attends. The principal of the school where the learner is attending shall provide such a transfer letter to the learner. The transfer letter must confirm the enrolment of the learner at the school and contain the learner's name, ID number and grade. The transfer letter must be on the school letterhead, signed by the principal and stamped with the school stamp.

Permit of residence /  
Study permit

Schools must make a copy of the official permit of residence, or the official study permit, and attach it to the application for admission.

In order to assist refugees to obtain the required documentation, school principals and district officials could recommend that such persons register with the Centre for Refugees in terms of the Refugees Act, 130/1998.

People classified as illegal aliens must, when they apply for admission to a public school for their children or for themselves, show evidence that they have applied to the Department of Home Affairs to legalise their stay in the country in terms of the Immigration Act, 13/2002.

Learners from countries other than South Africa must present the most recent original report card from the school or institution last attended.

Learners transferring to WCED public schools from an independent school or from home education need to present the same documents for admission and registration as required in this policy.

**Notification to parents**

The school principal informs the parent(s) or learner in writing within the time frames laid down by this policy, but not later than 10 school days after the closing date for applications, that the learner has been admitted to the school, or has not been admitted to the school. Schools must send the letter via registered post or devise a system that includes signature of receipt of notification. A copy of the letter of notification and proof of dispatch and signature of receipt must be kept on file. Also see the Admission Time Frames in this policy.

Waiting lists

If a learner is placed on a waiting list, the school **must inform** the parents or guardians that they must also apply to other schools to ensure the admission of the learner in the next year. The school must clearly state that a place in the school may not become available.

Reasons for not admitting

Where a learner is not admitted, this letter shall provide the reason.

**Acceptance of a school place**

Where the learner has been accepted, the notification letter must request written confirmation from the parent(s) or learner by a specified date stating that the learner will accept the grade place at the school.

Forfeiting of a grade place

The letter to the parent(s) or learner shall make it clear that, if the school does not receive a written response by the due date, the grade place shall be lost.

A parent whose child has been allocated a grade place, but who has not accepted this place within the stipulated period of time, may re-apply to the same school or another school for admission.

**Over-age learners**

An over-age learner is a learner who is more than two years older than the age group norm [the Grade plus 6 years] for a specific grade. The prescripts and procedures for the admission of over-age learners in Circular 240/2003 apply.

**Grade R learners**

When admitting Grade R learners the prescripts and procedures in Circular 46/2004 apply.

Schools that have received Grade R classrooms may use such classrooms only for Grade R education.

**Married Learners** Schools may recommend to married learners, but may not coerce them, to continue their education in a less formal education setting where there is more flexibility in dress code, attendance hours and the choice to participate in afternoon extra-mural activities and school tours, etc.

## 12. REGISTRATION ON CEMIS

The registration of learners on the WCED's CEMIS **is compulsory**. All learners who are admitted to a school must be registered on the CEMIS. All learners who leave a school must be taken off the school's enrolment on the CEMIS system.

All entries to CEMIS are done on-line on the Internet. Primary and combined schools may register large numbers of new registrations on the off-line tool as prescribed by CEMIS. Enquire about CEMIS access at tel no. 0800 204 800.

**WCED CEMIS** The CEMIS generates a unique WCED identity number when a learner is registered on the system. This WCED identity number will be used on all the documentation and official forms pertaining to that learner.

The CEMIS database of each public school shall reflect all the learners enrolled at that school.

### Official CEMIS documents for the following:

**First-time registration** These would be learners entering Grade R or 1 in the Western Cape or learners in any other grade who come from another province, another country, an independent school or a home school. When a learner who has never been in a WCED public school, is enrolled for the first time in the WCED school system, the principal shall register the learner on the CEMIS by means of the **CEMIS Learner Registration Form**.

Learner  
Registration form

Registration of pre Grade R learners on CEMIS may be done only by special schools that such learners attend. See also WCED Circular 0046/2004.

**Transfers** Where a learner is already enrolled in a WCED public school, and that learner moves to another WCED public school, the principal of the school that the learner is attending shall issue an original **CEMIS Transfer Certificate** to the learner when the learner leaves that school, i.e. at the end of a term or at the end of the year. The principal of the receiving school may register the learner only by means of the original **CEMIS Transfer Certificate**. This also applies to expelled learners.

Transfer  
certificate

CEMIS Minute  
0001/2008 The prescripts in par. 2.1.4 "CEMIS Learner Transfers" in the *WCED Knowledge Management, Information Management Systems and ICT Minute 0001/2008* must be followed for CEMIS Transfer Certificates.

**Please note:** Only one original CEMIS Transfer Certificate can be issued [printed] from the CEMIS system.

**Re-entry into school** [Reregistration] Where a learner who was in a WCED school and who has not attended a WCED school for a period, wishes to attend school again, the principal of the school to which the learner applies for admission, shall register the learner by

Deregistration Certificate	<p>means of the CEMIS <b>Deregistration Certificate</b> presented by the learner.</p> <p>On re-registration, the learner will be registered on the CEMIS using his or her previous unique WCED identity number.</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> The CEMIS form for a Transfer Certificate and for a De-registration Certificate is the same form (with different Sections to complete).</p> <p><b>Please also note</b> the requirements in Circular 240/2003 with regard to admission of over-age learners. Over-age learners may be admitted to a school only with the permission of the circuit team manager.</p>
<b>Deregistration of learners</b> Deregistration certificate	<p>Deregistration means permanently removing a learner from the WCED school system. The reasons why the learner was deregistered will appear on the CEMIS <b>Deregistration Certificate</b> provided to the learner. The reason could, for example, be one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Absence of <b>more than 10 consecutive school days</b>, without communication to the school</li> <li>▪ Decision by a pregnant learner not to attend school</li> <li>▪ Leaving the school system permanently [e.g. for the job market]</li> <li>▪ Prolonged ill health</li> <li>▪ Completion of Grade 12</li> </ul> <p>NOTE: Expelled learners who go to another school are not deregistered, but receive a <u>Transfer Certificate</u>.</p>
Absence	<p>Learners who are regularly absent from school must be dealt with in terms of the disciplinary procedures prescribed in the Regulations Relating to Serious Misconduct of Learners at Public Schools promulgated in Provincial Government Gazette 5190 of October 1997. Schools have a responsibility in terms of the SASA Section 3(5) to investigate and to assist parents and learners to remedy the situation, thus ensuring that all learners of compulsory school-going age attend school.</p> <p>All learners who have <b>not attended school for 10</b> or more consecutive school days without notifying the school, <u>and</u> whose parents or care-givers have not responded to the written request from the school principal seeking an explanation for the absence, <b>will be de-registered</b> from the WCED school system via a CEMIS <b>De-registration Certificate</b>, which has to be posted to the learner. The De-registration Certificate must be filed on the learner's profile.</p> <p>A letter must be sent via registered mail to the parent to request a reason for the absence of the learner. The school principal shall keep a copy of the letter and proof of the postal registration on file in the school's office. A duplicate copy must be included in the learner profile.</p>
School leavers	<p>All learners leaving the WCED school system permanently, e.g. Grade 12s, shall be de-registered via a <b>De-registration Certificate</b>.</p>
Grade 12	<p>Learners in Grade 12 who have failed and want to continue their schooling may</p>

not be refused re-admission to school, provided that the school has

space available and that the learner repeats all the subjects for Grade 12. Learners who want to repeat only certain subjects to achieve Grade 12 should be directed to an AET centre.

Also note Circular 0240/2003 par. 3.2.2.

**NOTE:** Removal of a learner from the school's enrolment happens via a CEMIS Transfer Certificate [the learner goes to another school] or a CEMIS De-registration Certificate [the learner permanently leaves the WCED school system].

### 13. THE REGISTRATION PROCESS

#### **CEMIS registration**

The principal of the school that has admitted a learner, shall register the learner online on the CEMIS on the date when the learner begins to attend that school, **by completing the compulsory** CEMIS Transfer Certificate **or** CEMIS Learner Registration Form or a CEMIS De-registration Certificate.

Schools that cannot register learners online on the CEMIS, must approach the district office for assistance.

#### **Admission register**

The WCED CEMIS replaces the manual admission register.

In order to meet the requirements of the NEPA, a regularly updated printout of the CEMIS data shall be kept in a file in the office of the school principal.

A register containing the names of each learner's parents, their address(es) and telephone number(s), etc., must be kept at the school. This register must be updated regularly to ensure accuracy of information.

#### **Learner profile** Request for learner profile

When a learner has been enrolled at a school, the principal shall, in writing and within 10 school days after registration, request from the principal of the school where the learner was last enrolled, that the learner's information and profile be mailed to the learner's new school. By the end of February of every school year, the learner profile of each enrolled learner must be available at the school where the learner is currently enrolled.

The profile for each learner registered at a school must be kept updated and must always be available to WCED officials.

#### **Late applications**

Learners, who apply after October for admission in the following year, shall be accommodated where school places exist, but not necessarily at the nearest school to the learner's place of residence or the school of choice.

Learners, who require admission to a WCED school at the commencement of the new school year, or during the year, shall report to the WCED education district office nearest to their place of residence to enquire about a school where vacancies exist. District offices shall assist parents to place learners whenever district intervention in the admission process is required.

**Right of appeal**

In terms of SASA Section 5(9), any learner or parent of a learner who has been refused admission to a public school may appeal to the MEC against the decision.

The SASA defines a school as “*a public school or an independent school which enrolls learners in one or more grades from grade R to grade twelve*”.

Principals must inform parents and learners of their right to appeal against the decision of the school. When parents are not satisfied with a decision with regard to admission, they may appeal to the MEC, in writing, against the decision of the district director and/or the school.

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