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To: Deputy Directors-General, Chief Directors, Directors, Heads: Curriculum Coordination and Advice, Deputy Chief Education Specialists, Subject Advisers and Principals of all public schools

Short summary: eLearning professional development

Subject: eLearning professional development

1. The Western Cape Education Department (WCED) hereby expresses its gratitude and sincere appreciation for the manner in which schools and teachers have embraced processes related to the roll-out of the eLearning Game Changer. The WCED has embarked on an exciting pathway of providing digital infrastructure to schools (e.g. LAN, WAN, software and hardware) over time and professional development to teachers and principals to ensure the increased use and integration of eLearning to enhance the quality of teaching and learning.
2. While the WCED will play its role in guiding and managing this process, the success of this initiative depends on the leadership at school level. Principals and the management at schools need to create an enabling environment in which teachers will explore and use the possibilities offered by digital technology to deepen learners' understanding in ways that address differing intelligences and contemporary mediums of communication.
3. Principals and teachers who accept responsibility for using every opportunity to develop themselves professionally to increase the efficiency and effectivity of school management, classroom teaching and school-based assessment are central to this process.
4. In order to support principals and teachers as they grow professionally, the WCED developed a developmental pathway which consists of five levels of competence.
5. A variety of developmental programmes have been aligned to these levels from which teachers and principals can identify and select courses that will enhance their

current level of technological skill and their ability to integrate it into their lessons or school administration and management.

6. The following will support teachers in making the best professional development decisions:

6.1 Competency assessments

6.1.1 It is envisaged that all teachers determine their own level of proficiency through a competency assessment that can be done on a desktop computer or cell phone.

6.1.2 Once the competency assessment has been concluded, teachers will be informed of their level of competence. A menu of possible courses to further up-skill the teacher will be provided for consideration.

6.2 Training

6.2.1 Courses will be presented by the Cape Teaching and Leadership Institute (CTLI), Centre for e-Innovation (CeI), Head Office and district subject specialists. These courses and the relevant enrolment procedures will be communicated by these entities.

6.2.2 Private and corporate entities like Microsoft and Google and others also offer excellent programmes for consideration.

6.2.3 Courses are normally developed so that participation could either be face-to-face, online or blended. The applicable modes in which the courses will be presented will be indicated. It is important that teachers construct their own development pathway based on their individual needs and do not merely attend any engagement without considering whether it could be a repetition of previous engagements.

6.3 Classroom activities and developmental programmes

6.3.1 Initially teachers should focus on acquiring the needed technological skills to understand computers and use software programmes.

6.3.2 However, the attainment of any level of technical ability does not constitute the automatic application of this skill in the classroom for teaching purposes.

6.3.3 Teachers should therefore intentionally experiment, seek guidance and combine technological skills with pedagogical competencies to enhance the teaching and learning experience daily.

7. Registration

- 7.1 Teachers will receive timeous information about the available courses they can do to enhance their skills development and application of it when teaching.
- 7.2 This will also include procedures for registration.

8. Accreditation and Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) credits

Teachers should confirm whether a specific course has been accredited for CPTD credits prior to any professional development engagement. Organisers should communicate this information clearly.

9. Roll-out processes

The provision of professional development for teachers and principals is a challenging process. Schools should therefore appreciate the approach of rolling professional development out to specific target groups in a planned process.

- 10. A final salute to our schools, principals and teachers for every effort you make to create a new world of teaching and learning for our learners to secure the best educational opportunities for the future.

SIGNED: BK SCHREUDER
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DATE: 2016-11-26