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Enquiries: P van Niekerk

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To: Deputy Directors-General, Chief Directors, Directors (Head Office and district offices), Circuit Managers, Principals and Chairpersons of governing bodies

Short summary: *This serves to inform ordinary public schools of the time frames for applications for admission to Western Cape Education Department schools and the management of school admission information for 2022/2023.*

**Subject: Dates and time frames for applications for admission to ordinary public schools and the management of school admission information for 2022/2023**

1. The demand for learning places at schools in the Western Cape continues to grow annually. In order to manage admissions effectively, schools are required to adhere to the time frames listed in this document.
2. The measures outlined in this circular apply to applications received in **2022** for admission to ordinary public schools in **2023**.
3. The dates set out in this circular allow the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) to plan more efficiently for the provision of classrooms, staff establishments, the procurement of learning and teaching support material and all other systemic interventions required to ensure that schools are ready to start each year.

#### 4. **Online Admissions System**

- 4.1 The Online Admissions System will be fully implemented for the 2022/2023 admissions process.
- 4.2 Schools are reminded that the WCED gave notice of its intention to phase out all hard copy and alternative application forms for 2022/2023 and schools were asked to give input on the Online Admissions System as per Circular 0006/2021, dated 25 February 2021.
- 4.3 Many parents and organisations have raised concerns about schools compelling parents to complete additional hard copy or other online forms and/or requiring the submission of additional information which is unlawful or in contravention of the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPI Act), 2013 (Act 4 of 2013).
- 4.4 This circular therefore confirms that the **administration** of admissions for 2023 must be done on the official WCED Online Admission System and schools may therefore NOT use their own hard copy application forms, online forms or systems, or request any additional information from parents not in line with the South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act 84 of 1996), the *Admission Policy for Ordinary Public Schools*, published in *Government Gazette* No. 19377 of 19 October 1998, or the POPI Act.

#### 5. **Admission time frames**

- 5.1 Schools are required to adhere to the following WCED admission time frames which will be **applicable to all ordinary public schools ONLY**:

<b>2022/2023 DATES</b>	<b>ACTIVITY</b>
14–16 February 2022	Schools complete and sign off automated planned enrolment on the Online Admissions System.
21–23 February 2022	Circuit managers verify and sign off automated planned enrolment on EduInfoSearch.
14 March 2022	School admissions <b>open</b> (all ordinary public schools).
15 April 2022	School admissions <b>close</b> (all ordinary public schools).
18 April – 20 May 2022	Schools process applications.
<b>23 May 2022</b>	<b>Principals finalise and sign off all application statuses on the Online Admissions System.</b>
27 May 2022	System displays the outcome of all applications.
27 May – 03 June 2022	Parents are informed of the outcome per email/SMS.
<b>27 May – 17 June 2022</b>	<b>Parents confirm acceptance.</b>
20 June – 31 August 2022	Schools fill available places.
20 June – 31 August 2022	Parents are informed of places. Parents must accept and confirm places within <b>three days</b> .

Term 3/4	WCED resolves and places unplaced learners in consultation with schools.
After progression and promotion is signed off	Schools confirm enrolment.

5.2 As the accountable officer, the **principal** must sign off the status of applications on the Online Admissions System on **23 May 2022, as the successful status of an application cannot be reversed after publication on 27 May 2022.**

5.3 Schools **MAY NOT** inform parents of the outcome of their application status before it is displayed on the Online Admission System.

5.4 If parents do not confirm acceptance by **17 June 2022**, schools may offer such places to learners on the waiting list or to other learners who still need placement.

5.5 As applications are processed, the Online Admissions System generates a list of unplaced learners and indicates which schools have places available.

5.6 It is therefore vital that schools ensure that their planned enrolment is correct and that applications are processed by the due dates to ensure that officials have accurate information, which will be used to inform parents of the available places.

## 6. **Application process**

6.1 Schools are requested to make every effort to empower parents to apply on the Online Admissions System by assisting in the following ways:

6.1.1 Governing bodies could allow parents to access and use the computer lab under supervision in controlled conditions where the risk to the school is very low.

6.1.2 Reliable and trustworthy parents, teachers, administrative staff, interns or computer literate Grades 7–12 learners could volunteer to assist parents with the online application process.

6.2 In cases where internet access is unavailable, parents may access the internet at public libraries, hand in their applications directly to schools or request assistance from the district office.

6.3 Parents are strongly advised to apply to more than one school. This will ensure that parents have another possible option if their school of choice does not have a place.

6.4 Parents are required to indicate their order of preference on the Online Admissions System. This eliminates the blocking of places which delays the finalisation of admissions on an annual basis.

- 6.5 Parents must use the following website address, <https://wcedonline.westerncape.gov.za> to make their final choice. This website can be accessed from any device that can access the internet, such as laptop computers, tablets and even smartphones.
- 6.6 All applications, whether captured by the parent or handed in to the school, MUST be captured and processed on the Online Admissions System.
- 6.7 Schools must prioritise applications submitted during the set application timeframe.
- 6.8 Please be advised that in the case of an admissions appeal, dispute or a legal challenge, schools may be required to provide the details of an application, such as when and how the application was processed. These details will then be taken from the official WCED admissions information database.
- 6.9 Schools are reminded that parents can check the status of their application on the Online Admissions System at any time, and it is therefore very important for schools to ensure that the system correctly displays the outcome of applications at all times and to adhere to the time frames.
- 6.10 Schools and districts MUST capture ALL late applications received.

## 7. **Parents confirming acceptance and submitting supporting documents**

- 7.1 Parents must confirm acceptance of their final choice before 00:00 on **17 June 2022**. If parents do not confirm final acceptance by this date and time, the Online Admissions System will automatically allocate the first successful offer from a school on the list.
- 7.2 Parents can confirm acceptance in the following ways:
- confirming directly on the Online Admissions System;
  - signing and submitting a confirmation letter/reply slip directly to the school; or
  - contacting their nearest district office.
- 7.3 The school must then upload the confirmation of acceptance on the Online Admissions System before 00:00 on 17 June 2022.
- 7.4 Parents must upload copies of the supporting documents required onto the Online Admissions System when they apply.
- 7.5 After 17 June 2022, parents must hand in certified copies of supporting documents to the school where the learner's application was successful and it was confirmed that the learner will be attending school in 2023. This must be done within **seven school days** after confirmation of acceptance.

7.6 Governing bodies retain the right to reject applications if parents submit false/untrue or fraudulent documents.

7.7 After confirmation of acceptance by parents, schools may proceed to offer places which are open to learners on the waiting list or other learners who still need places.

8. **Resolving cases where learners have not secured a place at a school**

The relevant district officials charged with admissions administration will have access to the lists of unplaced learners and the available places at schools in the district. These officials will be required to assist in resolving the placement of learners by liaising with schools in their respective districts and circuits.

9. **Advocacy programme**

9.1 The WCED will embark on a full advocacy programme which will include various media formats and platforms to inform the public.

9.2 This will include print media, posters, pamphlets, print advertisements as well as radio and applicable social media platforms.

9.3 Top-up information and training sessions on the Online Admissions System will be held for officials and school admissions staff during October to November 2021. Details of these sessions will follow.

10. In light of the increased demand for places at schools, the WCED trusts that these measures will assist schools and parents. We wish to thank principals, governing bodies and officials for their support in placing all learners in schools.

11. All queries in respect of admissions can be emailed to [WCED.Admissions@westerncape.gov.za](mailto:WCED.Admissions@westerncape.gov.za) or directed to the Head: Management and Governance or the relevant circuit manager in each district.

12. Kindly bring the contents of this circular to the attention of all concerned.

**SIGNED:** B WALTERS

**HEAD: EDUCATION**

**DATE:** 2021-10-08