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Enquiries: B Walters

To: Principals, Teachers and Staff at public schools

(For information: Governing Bodies)  
(For information: Independent Schools)

Dear Colleagues

### **VACCINATION OF EDUCATORS AND STAFF AT PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

The Western Cape Education Department (WCED) is delighted that the National Government has secured the Johnson & Johnson (J&J) single dose COVID-19 vaccine for all teaching and non-teaching staff at schools above the age of 40.

This is an exciting and much welcomed development as we prepare for the reopening of schools in the third term with a 100% attendance for primary school and special needs learners.

However, as of today, 09 June 2021, this vaccine has not yet been approved. While there is no guarantee that it will be approved in the next few days, we have decided to inform schools of this development so that we can prepare, in advance, in case it is approved and delivered soon. If it does not get approved, we will have thus prepared for another opportunity if that opportunity is presented again.

The Provincial Department of Health (DoH), in collaboration with the WCED, intend rolling out the vaccination programme from 14 June 2021 to 25 June 2021. Although it is a voluntary process, all educators and support staff, inclusive of governing body employees, are encouraged to get vaccinated.

This drive is critical to ensure that our educators and support staff receive the required protection against the COVID-19 virus.

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The success of this vaccination drive requires active collaboration between Head Office, district offices and all schools.

While PERSAL data will be used to register public service staff and educators onto the Electronic Vaccination Data System (EVDS), the WCED and the DoH in the Western Cape have decided to facilitate registration confirmations to ensure that all beneficiaries who consent to vaccination (including governing body appointed staff) will be registered. Teaching and learning time will thus be protected, as far as possible.

The beneficiaries of the rollout of this vaccine include:

- Governing body and WCED appointed educators at schools;
- Governing body and WCED administrative staff and general workers at schools;
- Food handlers employed by the Governing Body at schools;
- School transport drivers; and
- Governing body and WCED specialised auxiliary services staff at schools

It currently does not include:

- Outside service providers – such as sport administrators, curriculum supplementary programmes and extra-curricular staff who are not employed by the governing body or the WCED.
- Governing body and WCED staff under the age of 40 years;
- Employees at independent schools; or
- WCED district and Head Office staff that visit schools – i.e., circuit managers, curriculum advisers and staff supporting curriculum supplementary programmes in schools.

Please note, if capacity exists all school-based officials below the age of 40 years could also benefit therefore, the information of all school-based officials is required.

We understand that the limitations on beneficiaries for the vaccine is a concern. However, the number of vaccines secured cannot cover the whole education sector at this stage. We have raised this for future consideration.

Individuals who are over 60 years of age and are registered on the EVDS system can choose whether they would like to make use of the opportunity presented by the DoH with the J&J vaccine or wait for the EVDS to provide a timeslot.

The process going forward has been outlined in Circular 28/2021. Please read the circular carefully. It is important that principals finalise and sign off the confirmed staff members who wish to register by **10h00 on 11 June 2021**.

Once uploaded, the districts will coordinate the venue, date and time with the respective principals when educators and support staff have been scheduled for vaccination. We need to ensure that teaching and learning time is protected as much as possible.

Given these tight timeframes and the huge number of staff that could be vaccinated, the task at hand is enormous. It is, however, an opportunity that we do not want to miss, and we are working around the clock to ensure that it happens.

The Provincial DoH has secured two large sites in the Cape Metropole and 27 smaller sites in the rural areas. Some driving will be required for some school staff. This, and whether special arrangements for the school day will need to be made, will be communicated via the district. Principals are requested to help support staff who do not have access to transport to ensure that they are accommodated in lift club arrangements, while, simultaneously, ensuring that the relevant health and safety protocols are observed.

Please see attached information leaflets on the J&J vaccine and what to expect on the day of vaccination. These must be distributed with the consent forms.

While we are hopeful that this opportunity will become available again for staff under the age of 40 as well as independent schools, there is no guarantee. This opportunity may not present itself again for over 40s either at all public schools.

The education sector has suffered great learning losses over the past 15 months, and it will be felt for years to come. This is a major step towards recovery and the provision of better learning opportunities for our learners.

Kind regards



**BRENT WALTERS**  
**HEAD: EDUCATION**  
**DATE: 09 JUNE 2021**