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Cape Teaching and Leadership Institute Minute: 0006/2020

To: Deputy Directors-General, Chief Director: Districts, Directors (district offices), Circuit Managers, Heads of Higher Education Institutions, Principals and Chairpersons of governing bodies

Subject: Teaching practice at Western Cape Education Department schools in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic

1. Following earlier communication, dated 18 August 2020, the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) confirms its support for the teaching practice component of Work Integrated Learning as a fundamental part of initial teacher education that cannot be compromised.
2. The previous memorandum communicated the following:
 - 2.1 As communicated by the Department of Higher Education and Training, teaching practice for final-year BEd and Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) students was approved for commencement from 01 September 2020.
 - 2.2 Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) were requested to identify the schools they use in their teaching practice programme carefully and to communicate those requests and other related information to the relevant WCED district directors and principals.
 - 2.3 The WCED has great understanding for the specific needs of HEIs regarding teaching practice, such as when first-, second- and third-year students would be able to do their practice teaching. However, this would depend entirely on the level of functionality of schools as the 2020 school year continues.

3. After thorough consideration and monitoring of schools in the province, the WCED further wishes to confirm the following:
 - 3.1 **Schools and teachers are under immense pressure** to secure maximum and impactful teaching, assessment and learning during the remaining months of 2020. It is therefore **preferred that all final year students (BEd and PGCE) complete their teaching practice during Term 3 of 2020.**
 - 3.2 In June 2020 the Department of Basic Education indicated that the practice teaching of **final year students must be prioritised.** First-, second- and third-year students must not be involved in practice teaching for the remainder of 2020. HEIs have already confirmed alternative practices for these students.
 - 3.3 Given the late start of schools in 2021, approval is granted only for **third- and fourth-year students of 2021** to continue with teaching practice during **Term 1 of 2021.**
4. **Important to note:**
 - 4.1 Should the **qualification of any final year HEI student be compromised at the end of this academic year (in terms of graduation requirements related to the completion of teaching practice),** a motivation for teaching practice must be presented to the Head of Education.
 - 4.2 It remains the responsibility of the HEI to find suitable placements and plan with schools on how students can be accommodated whilst adhering to all health and safety protocols.
 - 4.3 A serious appeal is made to all principals to support and accommodate teaching practice at their schools, if approached. Ensuring the qualification of well-trained teachers requires all the necessary support it deserves.
5. The WCED trusts that the abovementioned information will be understood and that everything possible will be done to find the best possible solution.

SIGNED: H MAHOMED

ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL: CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT MANAGEMENT

DATE: 2020-10-21