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Curriculum GET Minute: DCG 0001/2021

To: Deputy Directors-General, Chief Directors, Directors, Heads: Curriculum Support, Heads: Management and Governance, Circuit Managers, Deputy Chief Education Specialists, GET Coordinators, Intermediate Phase Subject Advisers, Senior Phase Subject Advisers and Principals of all ordinary public and independent schools

**Subject: South African Mathematics Challenge for Grades 4–7 and South African Mathematics Olympiad for Grades 8 and 9**

1. The **South African Mathematics Challenge (SAMC)** and the **South African Mathematics Olympiad (SAMO)** are Mathematics opportunities for learners in Grades 4 to 7 and Grades 8 and 9 respectively. The SAMC and SAMO seek to develop the quality of Mathematics teaching and learning by providing learners with interesting and challenging problems at their own grade level as well as developing key 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.
2. The SAMC and SAMO aim to:
  - popularise Mathematics;
  - promote problem solving in Mathematics education;
  - promote a perspective that mathematical activity is more than just calculating;
  - emphasise the importance of reading during mathematical activities;
  - disseminate materials that contribute to meaningful mathematical activities in classrooms;
  - provide a diagnostic tool to enable teachers to identify learners' misconceptions.
3. The SAMC and SAMO are not merely about competing, but rather aim to expose learners to challenging mathematical problems. The questions are designed to develop understanding, applying knowledge in new situations, communication and general mathematical thinking.
4. There are two ways in which to participate:
  - Stronger learners may prefer to participate as individuals (singles).
  - Other learners may prefer to work in pairs (doubles).

5. The **2021 South African Mathematics Challenge (Grades 4–7)** will have **three rounds**:
  - First round: 15–19 March 2021
  - Second round: 18 May 2021
  - Final round: 22 July 2021
  
6. The **2021 South African Mathematics Olympiad (Grades 8 and 9)** will have **three rounds**:
  - First round: 11 March 2021
  - Second round: 18 May 2021
  - Final round: 22 July 2021
  
7. It is recommended that learners be afforded the opportunity to engage with previous years' papers.
  - Grades 4–7 SAMC past papers can be downloaded from:  
<http://www.samfolympiads.co.za/ChallengePage.aspx?ID=69&AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1>
  - Grades 8 and 9 SAMO papers can be downloaded from:  
[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1rl5ZGTnCw4i72707K95tCCZ\\_TAIWLDK3?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1rl5ZGTnCw4i72707K95tCCZ_TAIWLDK3?usp=sharing)
  
8. There are no entry forms for the SAMC. All schools will receive the question papers and memoranda to be written at the school. Once marked, the results will be captured on a specific form provided by the SAMF and sent to the SAMF, who will further manage the registration process for the second round.
  
9. Entries for the SAMO are already open. Schools that wish to enter can register online with the South African Mathematics Foundation (SAMF) at <https://www.samf.ac.za/en/sa-mathematics-olympiad> or can complete and submit the entry form attached as Annexure A. Please ensure that entry forms are duly completed.
  
10. The Western Cape Education Department (WCED) will subsidise the entry fees for learners at ordinary public schools. **The closing date for entries is 26 February 2021.**
  
11. Papers for the first round will be distributed by district/circuit organisers via email and schools need to make copies for their participating learners.
  
12. The first round will be written at schools. Teachers may mark the answers or it may be marked during an open class discussion by learners. The memorandum will be provided by the SAMF.
  
13. The second round is only for learners who achieved 50% or more in the first round and will be conducted at central venues in the different regions.
  
14. Every participant of the SAMC/SAMO will be challenged with at least one problem, which will improve his or her problem-solving skills. Problem-solving skills can be further

improved by carefully working through the solutions for these rounds. Alternative and innovative solutions will be presented and it is recommended that the problems used in the papers be used as resources for classroom discussions.

15. Creative problem-solving skills are necessary and very marketable in today's technically oriented marketplace. This marketplace is now global and South Africa needs to be competitive. Hence, we need expert problem solvers. Practise in problem solving will help to train our future leaders of technological development.
16. The logistical arrangements for both competitions can be found on the following websites:  
**SAMC – Grades 4–7:** <http://www.samf.ac.za/en/sa-mathematics-challenge>  
**SAMO – Grades 8 and 9:** <http://www.samf.ac.za/en/sa-mathematics-olympiad>
17. The SAMF recognises achievement and will award the following certificates:
  - Gold certificate: All learners scoring more than 80% in the final round
  - Silver certificate: All learners scoring between 60% and 79% in the final round
  - Bronze certificate: All learners scoring between 50% and 59% in the final round.
18. Principals are kindly requested to bring this minute to the attention of all Mathematics teachers.

**SIGNED:** PAD BEETS

**DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL: CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT MANAGEMENT**

**DATE:** 2021-02-03