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Curriculum GET & FET Minute: 0001/2023

To: Deputy Directors-General, Chief Directors, Directors, Heads: Curriculum Support, Circuit Managers, Deputy Chief Education Specialists, Intermediate, Senior Phase and FET Band Subject Advisers, Principals and Departmental Heads of ordinary public schools

**Subject: Back on Track programme to strengthen Languages and Mathematics in Grades 4, 7, 8, 10 and 12**

1. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused unprecedented disruption to education systems across the world. One of the consequences of the pandemic was reduced time for teaching and learning, resulting in substantial learning losses. Numerous global and local reports confirmed the deep losses and risks suffered during this time. These reports include:
  - *How is the COVID-19 pandemic affecting educational quality in South Africa?*, 2020, by Martin Gustafsson and Carol Nuga;
  - Western Cape Education Department (WCED) Systemic Diagnostic Report, 2022;
  - WCED Systemic Diagnostic Results Report, 2022; and
  - *Learning losses from COVID-19 in the Western Cape, 2019–2021*, by Servaas van der Berg, Ursula Hoadley, Jaamia Galant, Chris van Wyk and Bianca Böhmer of the Research on Socio-Economic Policy Team from Stellenbosch University.
2. To mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on learning and teaching, the WCED is implementing a three-year curriculum recovery programme called **Back on Track**.
3. In the Intermediate and Senior Phases, the programme will focus on Mathematics and Languages and will include:
  - a) Teacher professional development targeting 2000 teachers based on a 1 + 9 model, where selected teachers will be pulled out of schools once every 10 days.
  - b) Learner programmes which will target 10 000 learners in Grades 4, 7 and 8 and will be conducted on Saturdays and during school holidays in the form of bootcamps.

4. The criteria for the selection of the teachers and learners were based on the 2022 WCED systemic test results.
5. In the Further Education and Training Band (FET), the programme will focus on:
  - a) Grade 10: A total of 140 schools has been identified for targeted support in Mathematics, Physical Sciences, Life Sciences, Accounting, Business Studies and Economics.
    - Teachers of these schools will attend bi-weekly *Just in Time* teacher development sessions in these subjects; and
    - Identified learners will attend Saturday classes in these subjects.
  - b) Grade 12: Targeted support will be provided to progressed learners and learners at risk in the following subjects: English Home Language (HL), Afrikaans HL, Mathematics, Mathematical Literacy, Physical Sciences, Life Sciences, Accounting, Business Studies and Economics.
    - Teachers of these schools will attend bi-weekly *Just in Time* teacher development sessions in these subjects;
    - Identified learners will attend Saturday classes in these subjects; and
    - Identified learners will attend classes during the winter and spring school holidays.
6. Principals of the selected schools will receive further communication from their district offices and will also be invited to information sessions.
7. The programme is set to be launched on 04 May 2023.
8. Principals are requested to bring this minute to the attention of all Intermediate, Senior and FET teachers at their schools.

**SIGNED:** H MAHOMED

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

**DATE:** 2023-05-03