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Reference: COVID-19/20200517  
Enquiries: BK Schreuder

Dear Principals and School Management Teams of all Public Schools

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

**Guidelines for the management of Covid-19 in public schools**

On the 30<sup>th</sup> of April 2020, the Minister of Basic Education announced the details regarding the reopening of the education sector using a phased-in approach.

Since then, I have engaged in a number of discussions with the National Department of Basic Education (DBE), top management of the WCED, teacher unions, school governing body associations and principal organisations.

This coming week all SMTs and non-teaching staff will be at school to perform very essential functions in preparing for the return of teachers (25<sup>th</sup>) and learners. Last week, until 15 May, more than 80% of principals were at schools in the Western Cape and in just under 75% of schools cleaners were present and had started to thoroughly clean the schools. This has been possible as schools still have cleaning material to clean schools (as at the start of any new term) and the small group of staff that return first all must have masks to leave home.

The delivery of procured material is a mammoth task, as I am sure you can all understand. The delivery commenced last week and will continue this week when only SMTs and non-teaching staff are at school (and before the full staff returns). The delivery of the various items will be delivered in various tranches due to the quantity, with the first delivery sufficient to receive the first groups of learners. We have arranged that the first batch of masks will be delivered to schools this week via CMs and District offices. The temperature scanners are also all scheduled to be delivered this coming week.

The WCED has drafted Guidelines for the management of Covid-19 in public schools which aim to support your planning and preparation for the return of teachers and learners, as well as to assist you in maintaining safe hygiene practices.

The guidelines include various steps, actions and information on how to manage Covid-19 in your school. Please study these documents carefully and use them so as to ensure that your school complies with the new procedures.

The attached documents include the following:

- **A – WCED Guideline: Important information from the Provincial Department of Health**
- **B – WCED Guideline: Roles and Responsibilities**
- **C – WCED Guideline: Orientation of Staff and Learners**
- **D – WCED Guideline: Screening of Staff and Learners**
- **E – WCED Guideline: Cleaning of schools and maintaining hygiene**

We have yet to receive finalized documentation from the National Department of Basic Education on the above, as well as other areas in which we all need greater clarity.

The WCED is meanwhile finalizing the following Guidelines in order to further support you. These will be sent to you over the next few days in preparation for the return of learners.

- **F – WCED Guideline: School feeding**
- **G – WCED Guideline: Psycho-social support**
- **H – WCED Guideline: Managing safety of staff with underlying comorbidities**
- **I – WCED Guideline: Managing learners with underlying comorbidities**
- **J – WCED Guideline: Safety of Learners on the Learner Transport Scheme**
- **K - WCED Guideline: Managing hostel safety during Covid-19**

I trust that all SMT will familiarise themselves with the guidelines and communicate its content. Independent schools are welcome to use these guidelines to prepare for their own phased return.

It is also important for all schools to submit the preliminary lists of various staff with **comorbidities** to your district office. Please indicate a preliminary list of SMT members, non-cleaning staff and rest of staff.

I have received a number of queries regarding the screening process particularly and who screens who on arrival at school. **Please look carefully at D – WCED Guideline: Screening of Staff and Learners.**

Every day, every employee must be screened. The principal is to be screened by a designated SMT member, or deputy principal. The principal can then screen the official.

It is important that the temperature of every learner, teacher and non-teaching staff member has their temperature taken and recorded. Thermometers are scheduled to be delivered during this next week.

The following five questions also need to be answered by each individual on arrival at school.

No	Question
1	Do you have a cough?
2	Do you have a fever?
3	Do you have a shortness of breath?
4	Do you have a sore throat?
5	Within the last 14 days, did you have direct contact with someone known to have contracted Coronavirus (COVID-19)?

Should any staff member answer yes to any of the questions above, it is advised that the staff member be sent home as a precaution. If these flu-like symptoms persist, or if someone has come into direct contact with someone who has the coronavirus, they must please contact the national hotline on 0800 029 999 or the provincial hotline on 021 928 4102 for advice on what to do next. The screening of staff and learners is a safe process if the relevant social distancing and other protocols are observed at all times.

The WCED is currently finalising specific guidelines on what action a school must take should a teacher or learner appear ill or display symptoms associated with Covid-19, and the process involved if there is a confirmed case of Covid-19.

I want to sincerely thank all our principals, SMT members, cleaners and non-teaching staff who have already commenced cleaning and planning for this very different situation. I trust that the attached information will go some way in helping you prepare for the resumption of schooling under very difficult conditions. I have no doubt that it will test your leadership, vision and perseverance going forward, especially in this coming week.

Yours sincerely



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